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Prabuddha Bharata

OR
AWAKENED INDIA



By Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, and Yoga, by one or more or
all of these the vision of the Paramatman is obtained.

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Letters of Swami Shivananda .. .	401
Thou Beloved Mother! The Pole-Star of our Life— <i>Editorial</i> .. .	404
Swami Vivekananda's Synthesis of Science and Religion-3— <i>By Swami Ranganathananda</i>	410

विवेकानन्द साहित्य जन्मशती हिन्दी संस्करण

कुल १० खंड—डबल डिमाई १६ पेजी साइज में ; अनुक्रमणिका समेत पृष्ठ संख्या प्रति खंड लगभग ४५० ; मजबूत और आकर्षक सजिल्द प्रति खंड का मूल्य ६ रु० । पूरे सेट रेल द्वारा मँगाने से रेल-खर्च नहीं लगेगा । पुस्तक विक्रेताओं के लिए विशेष कमोशन दिया जाता है ।

स्वामी विवेकानन्द की समग्र ग्रन्थावली 'विवेकानन्द साहित्य' नाम से दस खंडों में प्रकाशित हुई है, जो राष्ट्रभाषा हिन्दी में ऐसा प्रथम प्रकाशन है । इन ग्रन्थों में स्वामोजी के दर्शन, धर्म, राष्ट्र, समाज आदि विषयक ओजपूर्ण व्याख्यानों तथा गम्भीर लेखों का पूर्ण संकलन है । अनुवादकों में पं० सूर्यकान्त त्रिपाठी 'निराला', पं० सुमित्रानन्दन पंत, डा० प्रभाकर माचवे, श्री फनीश्वरनाथ रेणु, डा० नर्मदेश्वर प्रसाद आदि ख्यातिलब्ध साहित्यकारों के नाम उल्लेखनीय है ।

“निस्सन्देह किसो से स्वामी विवेकानन्द के लेखों के लिए भूमिका की अपेक्षा नहीं है । वे स्वयं ही अप्रतिहत आकर्षण हैं ।” — महात्मा गांधी

व्यवस्थापक, अद्वैत आश्रम,

५, डिही एंटाली रोड, कलकत्ता-१४

SELF-RELIANCE and SELF-CONFIDENCE

are the BACKBONE of defence

CONTENTS (Contd.)

	<i>Page</i>
Vinoba Bhawe: The Nature and Scope of His Social Reforms-3 —By Dr. Jacques-Albert Cottat	416
The Spiritual Function of Literature—By Professor G. S. Banhatti ..	422
The Jivanmukta's Way of Life—By Sri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer .	428
Notes and Comments	434
Reviews and Notices	435
News and Reports ..	438



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Vol. LXIX

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No. 10



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—:o:—

LETTERS OF SWAMI SHIVANANDA

(46)

Chilkapeta House
P.O. Almora
Kumaon, U.P.
26 April 1914

Dear —,

I am extremely happy to receive another letter of yours. I have expressed my opinion about your earlier dream in my previous letter. This dream also is very inspiring. Certainly, it is the Lord's wish to manifest Himself to you in the form of Gopāla ; you, perhaps, will see and worship Him by assuming the attitude of Śrī Nanda or Śrīmatī Yaśodā and, through this practice, will attain great bliss and your heart will become holy and pure. You are, indeed, fortunate ; therefore it is that the Lord is revealing Himself to you in this pure form of Gopāla. This will conduce to your greatest good, rest assured.

During the summer vacation, try by all means to visit Calcutta and Math (Belur Math) and other holy places, and to meet the pure souls (residing there). I shall be then where the Lord places me ; I have no will of my own. I shall act as he makes me act.

expensive ; therefore, there is no necessity to come here. Our most revered

This is a far off place ; the route is very inaccessible, and the journey very and respected Holy Mother (Śrī Sarada Devi) is there in Calcutta ; also, Saradananda Swami and Master Mahashaya and other devotees. Meet them. In the Math, you will find Premananda Swami, Subodhananda Swami, and

other devotees ; meet them, your devotion to the Lord will increase. You will meet me when the Lord wills it—leave everything to Him. There is no bliss and peace like the dependence on the Lord. If he makes you experience His love and devotion while remaining in the house itself, then there is no necessity to go anywhere else. But it is really good to have a slight change of place during the holidays. Meeting with the devotees will conduce to the physical as well as mental well-being.

My heartfelt love and blessings to you. I am not keeping such good health nowadays. But the place is very cold ; it rarely gets hot. Even when the heat is scorching, cool breeze is always blowing. The water is excellent ; and the scenery, too, is charming, and inspires noble thoughts.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

(47)

Chilkapeta House
P.O. Almora
Kumaon, U.P.
15 May 1914

Dear —,

I am very glad to receive your letter. You worship the Lord Brahma Gopāla with the attitude of Śrī Yaśodā itself—it is an excellent attitude, very exalted and pure. It will remove the least trace of impurity from the mind. Sri Sri Thakur (Ramakrishna) remained in that attitude for many days—you will find it in his biography. You have seen the Holy Mother in the dream. It is very good. You will see in still how many more forms the Master will reveal himself to you in course of time. Truly you are blessed, there is not the least doubt about it. I have written to Premananda Maharaj that you will stay at the Math for a few days and have the privilege of their holy company.

None in the three worlds is my disciple. I am the Lord's servant ; as such, it is unnecessary to introduce yourself as a disciple of mine. But you may tell this much : that I do love you and tell you in answer to your questions whatever I know in regard to the worship of the Lord, and that I pray whole-heartedly for your spiritual progress ; and that would be more than enough. They are great devotees ; they can easily recognize you, and will be very affectionate and kind towards you.

In my opinion, there is no necessity of any further initiation etc. for you. Now, simply love Him, and serve Him after your heart. I was extremely happy to learn that you are serving Him with the best of flowers and fruits. Immerse yourself in His service.

With regard to the observance of cleanliness consequent on birth, death, etc., follow the usual practice. There is no harm in that, rather it is good. It is not advisable to break the customary rules of social conduct ; it is but

proper to follow the prevailing usage. That was also the Master's injunction.

I am glad to learn that you are keeping well. My health is somewhat better than before. My heartfelt love and blessings to you. I shall be happy to hear from you now and then about your welfare. May the Lord bless you with prosperity !

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

(48)

Chilkapeta House
P.O. Almora, U.P
27 June 1914

Dear —,

I have duly received your letter and noted the contents. I was very much pleased to learn that you visited, during the vacation, Navadvip, Kalighat, Dakshineswar, Belur Math, etc. and lived in the holy company of many devotees. It's very good to do so now and then, whenever you find time. This will contribute to the physical as well as mental welfare.

I am fully confident that the Lord will soon remove your family difficulty; nothing to worry about. Rest assured that this difficulty is only an occasion to increase your love, devotion, and faith all the more. It will never injure you.

I shall soon send you a small piece of old cloth worn by me, as also a little sugar offered to the Lord, after taking a portion of it. I know the Lord has been merciful to you even before you met me. I sincerely pray from the bottom of my heart that your love for Him and your faith in Him may increase and become firmly established; and I certainly do so in the case of those who want Ramakrishna. I have been trained by the Master in such a way that it is impossible for me to take up the position of a teacher; and I don't pray for it either from him, because that thought never occurs to me. In this age, the Master is the teacher and ideal of mankind; we just sincerely pray to him that the faith and devotion of the people for him may increase, and encourage and inspire confidence in them through instructions. It is my conviction that this itself will lead to their highest good.

My heartfelt love and blessings to you. Please acknowledge the receipt of the things I shall send you, and also write about your welfare. I am keeping indifferent health. Whatever happens by the will of the Lord, that alone is the best.

Your well-wisher,
Shivananda

THOU BELOVED MOTHER ! THE POLE-STAR OF OUR LIFE

[EDITORIAL]

The way to the unknown is through the known. The principle holds true as much in the field of scientific research as in the realm of the religious quest. The Hindu advocacy of the worship of the personal God, or an *avatāra* or incarnation, or other concrete representations like the images (*pratimās*) and the natural symbols (*pratīkas*), is based on this principle ; and is meant to lead us to the realization of the impersonal Absolute, which is beyond all names and forms. Most of us cannot even think of, let alone realize, the Absolute except through the medium of a concrete symbol. A personal God or an *avatāra* is the nearest approach to the highest Absolute on the physical and mental planes of our existence. And the easiest and smoothest way of reaching the Absolute, which is unknown and unknowable through the senses and the mind, is by establishing a definite human relationship with this representation of the Absolute and pouring out our heart's affections in Its adoration. To attain the Absolute, we need not forcibly tear ourselves away from ourselves and discard our natural emotions and intellectual faculties ; we have only to chasten and purify them by giving them a new direction, so that they become fit instruments for the play of the Divine.

Of all the human relationships, that of the mother and the child is the purest and noblest, for therein is the least taint of carnality and selfishness. Mother's love for the child is the closest to God's love for the devotee. Mother, the all-suffering and ever-forgiving mother, is, according to the Indian ideal, the queen of the family, to whom everyone should bow down and pay reverence. Motherhood is the perfect

type of womanhood. Mother' is the word used in India to address every woman. The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (I. 11) exhorts the young student : 'May your mother be a God unto you (*Mātr̥devo bhava*).' That is the first step in spiritual life. The last step would be when God becomes the mother unto us. As a matter of fact, only when the last step is taken would we have really and in the full sense of the term taken the first step ; only when we realize and know that God, the Mother of all mothers, is our mother, can we truly look upon our earthly mother as God. This spiritualization of the earthly relationship between the mother and the child, and its universalization, is the gist of the worship of God as the Divine Mother. This idea is the basis of the grand concept of Divine Motherhood.

For the devotees, however, the concept of the Divine Mother is not a mere matter of philosophic speculation, but a spiritual reality. Philosophically, the riddle of the One and the many, the Absolute and the manifestation, the unity and the diversity, presents a persistent problem, and can be explained only by positing the idea of the Divine Mother, conceived as Illusion, *Māyā*, *Avidyā*, *Prakṛti*, or the handmaid of God, who projects or creates this universe from out of Herself. How did the non-dual Absolute manifest Itself as the many ? The answer given is : It is due to *Māyā* or the Power of the Lord. This *Māyā* cannot categorically be characterized as real or be dispensed with as unreal. It is real in that we see its effect and influence everywhere, yet is unreal in that it is transcended in the state of *samādhi* (super-conscious-

ness), when we are one with the sole reality of Brahman. But that is a logically anomalous position, as we are forced to accept two levels of reality—a transcendental one and a pragmatic one. Sri Rama-krishna resolved the anomaly by saying that Brahman and Śakti are not different, but one and the same reality appearing as two in two different sets of circumstances. 'Kālī is none other than Brahman', he said. 'That which is called Brahman is really Kālī. She is the Primal Energy. When that Energy remains inactive, I call It Brahman, and when It creates, preserves, or destroys, I call It Śakti.' They are, he further explained, like fire and its power to burn, or like gem and its lustre, snake and its wriggling motion, or like the waters of the ocean when it is calm and is full of waves and bubbles. The two ideas are inseparable; when a person thinks of the one, he perforce thinks of the other too. 'If you are aware of the male principle, you cannot ignore the female principle. He who is aware of the father must also think of the mother. He who knows darkness also knows light. He who knows night also knows day.' He, no doubt, accepted the Advaitic position about the unreality of the whole universe, with its gods and goddesses included, in relation to the highest knowledge of Brahman, when he said: 'If you reason it out, you will realize that all these are as illusory as a dream. Brahman alone is the Reality, and all else is unreal. Even this very Śakti is unsubstantial, like a dream.' But he, with his deeper vision, also saw that that is a state which cannot be obtained for the mere asking. Man *was* too much under the sway of the Divine Mother. 'You may feel a thousand times that it is all magic, but you are still under the control of the Divine Mother. You cannot escape Her. You are not free. You must do what She makes you do. A man attains *Brahma-*

jñāna only when it is given to him by the Ādyāśakti, the Divine Mother. Then alone does he see the whole thing as magic, otherwise not. . . . Though you reason all your life, unless you are established in *samādhi*, you cannot go beyond the jurisdiction of Śakti. Even when you say, "I am meditating" or "I am contemplating", still you are moving in the realm of Śakti, within Its Power.'

The impact of this great Power, the Divine Mother, is on all of us in some form or other. We see it working all around us—in the field of science, in the spiritual world, in our individual lives as well as in the current of world events. Only the blind cannot see, or the perverted will not see or does not see it whole or sees it in a wrong light. Man puffed up with the pride of success may not recognize it, or may refuse to recognize it, because he feels that it is against the modern scientific temper, which rests its belief on the freedom of man's will to control, direct, and order the world phenomena according to man's set plan, unaided by any extracosmic power. The modern scientific temper is completely in tune with what an ancient Sanskrit couplet says: '*Udyoginam puruṣa-siṃhamupaiti Lakṣmīh*—It is the man of action, the lion-hearted, that the Goddess of Wealth resorts to.' This attitude is undoubtedly the precursor of all progress and prosperity. But it is also well to remember the words of Swami Vivekananda who said: 'It is not the whole truth to say that fortune favours the enterprising man; behind there must be the strength that comes of the Divine Mother', though he added, 'But I also admit that it is the enterprising man unto whom Mother gives strength', and had on several occasions said, 'Him I call an atheist who does not believe in himself'. We are the makers of our destiny, it is true, but not fully, only within the limitations that the universal

Power, which we call Mother, or in ordinary parlance, luck, fate, or fortune, permits us. We in the vigour and freshness of our youth may plan to do this or that, and think that we are the masters of our fortunes and that it is within our power to execute all our plans as and when we wish, but when, in our old age, we look back on our life, we are bound to admit that we succeed in fulfilling only those things that the Divine Mother allows us to.

The scientist is busily engaged in wresting from Nature her secrets. Great as has been his success in his attempt, he is still far away from his goal, and Mother Nature has yielded only a very small portion of Her secrets. With each advance, it appears as though he is going to do it now, but at every step there is an adamant wall barring his progress, and every success has been built on that element of chance that has favoured particular individuals. The career of the famous conquerors and adventurers of history, and the ignominious doom they have met with at a time when, as it were, nothing could stop them in their aggressive designs, points to the invisible hand of Śakti or Power that is directing the course of events on this earth, which is not drifting aimlessly without a guide and a rudder. This, however, is not the preaching of a philosophy of predestination or pre-determinism, nor a doctrine of pessimism and a plea for inaction, because everything is pre-ordained and nothing is there left for us to be done. It is a call for intensive action with the knowledge of the realities of life. When we know that there is a greater power than ourselves, which is unlimited in its scope and capacity, we do not become idle or apathetic to life; rather we work with redoubled energy and hope, but with humility. Humility in the face of that higher Power is not a name for weakness and does not forestall all human initiative and endeavour, but fills us with

inexhaustible strength, wisdom, and power to work for the good of humanity in the true spirit. We then become a blessing unto mankind and not a curse upon humanity, and man has not to bemoan his fate as he is doing now, because there is an accumulation of material power in his hands without a corresponding increase of wisdom.

‘Therefore,’ said Sri Ramakrishna, ‘one must take refuge in the Divine Mother, the Cosmic Power Itself. It is She who has bound us with the shackles of illusion. The realization of God is possible only when those shackles are severed. . . . One must propitiate the Divine Mother, the Primal Energy in order to obtain God’s grace.’ This process of propitiation is the most interesting phenomenon of history. We are not referring to the paraphernalia of worship that goes on in temples or houses daily or on special occasions, or to the autumnal worship of the Divine Mother that will be celebrated this month with great éclat throughout the country. Interesting and beneficial as they are, they are but the preliminary stages of this process of propitiation which prepare us for that supreme act of consecration, and not the supreme act itself.

The real propitiation is not a matter of a day or days, or months or years even, but a lifelong affair from which there is no respite. It starts when we are seized with an uncontrollable longing to have the vision of the Mother Herself and not be satisfied with the trivialities of life that She has placed in our hands for our amusement and diversion. And in this process of propitiation, there are no fixed methods, no formalities of worship, no prohibitions and restrictions, no injunctions and inhibitions, no rules and regulations: each devotee has his own method and way. For what code of conduct, what formality, what known method, binds or guides the play

of the mother with the child? The child plays with the mother freely and the mother plays with the child freely, and rules are made and unmade as the mood of the moment dictates the child as well as the mother and as it suits the pleasure and convenience of both. Similar is the case here. There is the Divine Mother and there is the child, the devotee longing for Her vision and to be in Her presence; and the devotee sails along the current of that longing where the wind of his love listeth. Sometimes he is thrown on the rough waves of the sea, tossed to the top now, pushed down to the trough a little later; at other times, he is on the smooth sailing current. Now he is caught in the vortex of a whirlpool, then is out of it. This moment he is about to be dashed against a rock, the next moment in the safe arms of the Divine Mother; but always near Her, under Her solicitous care and protection. The way of the one need not necessarily be the way of the other here. Each adores the Mother according to his predilection and predisposition, and all are acceptable to Her, everything is pleasing to Her. Each supplicates in accordance with his nature, and She responds to each according to his supplication. That makes for the infinite variety of expression in which the Divine Mother manifests Herself to each devotee, and sports with him. To one She may appear as the smiling Mother Durgā, to another as the terrible Kālī, to yet another as the majestic Rājarājeśvarī. Or to the same person, She may appear as all these at different times. Or, again, the same aspect of the Divine Mother may appear in different forms at different times—as for example, the same Kālī may appear as the tender Śyāmā Kālī dispensing boons and dispelling fear, or as the Rakṣā Kālī, the protectress in times of epidemic, famine, earthquake, drought, and flood, or as the Śmaśāna Kālī, the embodi-

ment of the power of destruction, residing in the cremation ground surrounded by corpses, jackals, and terrible spirits, with streams of blood flowing from Her mouth and with garland of human heads hanging from Her neck.

Thus, each devotee sees and propitiates Her in his own way. Look, for instance, at that great devotee Rāmaprasāda, who lived in the eighteenth century. It is said of him that he started his life as a book-keeper, which he tried to do as honestly and conscientiously as he could. At the end of a week, when his employer asked for the accounts book, he found to his surprise that the book was scribbled all over with songs in oblation to the Divine Mother. On the first page was the song beginning with the line: 'Mother! Make me Thine accountant. I shall never prove defaulter.' And he never proved a defaulter. He remained for the rest of his life Her efficient accountant, and kept a graphic account of all Her doings in the form of lyrical songs of the most exalted type. These songs pulsate with the heart-throbs of a mystic absorbed in the contemplation of the Mother, and paints in striking but harmonious shades the various moods of the devotee lost in the ecstasy born of the intimacy with the Mother. And in them we find some of the finest gems of spiritual life. Here is one for the delectation of our readers:

O mind, you do not know how to farm!
Fallow lies the field of your life.
If you had only worked it well,
How rich a harvest you might reap!
Hedge it about with Kālī's name,
If you would keep your harvest safe;
This is the stoutest hedge of all,
For Death himself cannot come near it.

Sooner or later will dawn the day
When you must forfeit your precious field;

Gather, O mind, what fruit you may.
Sow for your seed the holy name
Of God that your *guru* has given you,
Faithfully watering it with love;
And if you should find the task too hard,
Call upon Rāmprasād for help.

In Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, this propitiation of the Divine Mother reaches newer heights of perfection and fulfilment. In the case of both, this propitiation was in the nature of a conquest, as it were; only they did it in two almost diametrically opposite ways, one through willing submission and the other through fight and opposition. 'The future, you say,' Swami Vivekananda remarked once, 'will call Ramakrishna Paramahansa an incarnation of Kālī. Yes, I think there's no doubt that She worked up the body of Ramakrishna for Her own ends.' And about himself he had to say: 'How I used to hate Kālī! And all Her ways. That was the ground of my six years' fight—that I would not accept Her. But I had to accept Her at last! Ramakrishna Paramahansa dedicated me to Her, and now I believe that She guides me in everything I do, and does with me what She will.'

The two important landmarks in the life of Sri Ramakrishna were his direct vision of the Divine Mother in the temple of Dakshineswar with which he started his spiritual *sādhanās*, strictly according to the scriptural injunctions, and his worship of Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother, his own wife, as the veritable manifestation of the Divine Mother in the temple, with which he concluded those *sādhanās*. His worship ended where all worship should end. We start with image worship, and its culmination is, all our scriptures point out, seeing the Divine in the living image, that is, man himself. The early vision that Sri Ramakrishna had in the prime of his spiritual

life never, strictly speaking, left him; its impression was there on him, deep in his heart, and he was ever conscious of the presence of the Divine Mother thereafter. The word 'Mother' was always on his lips, and it was with Her permission that he undertook the other *sādhanās*. What happened subsequently was an extension of that earlier vision he had within the confines of the shrine to every other thing around him, until at last it ended in his seeing Her in his own wife and in every woman he saw or met, even in women of doubtful character. Time and place were no bar to this vision of his. He worshipped the 'Beautiful' in a girl of fourteen, in whom he saw the personification of the Divine Mother. And the blessedness of that life from which all carnality has died down, and in which one sees only the face of the Divine Mother in every woman!

Swami Vivekananda, too, had reached that state of blessedness. But he reached it through a somewhat different path from that of Sri Ramakrishna. He was, as he described himself often, a Kṣatriya by birth and temperament, and fighting was in his blood, as it were. He looked straight into the face of the Mother, never caring or even positively disliking to minimize Her terribleness, and stormed his way into victory. He liked to love Her as She was, in Her terribleness, and fought with Her and Her devilish creation, as he liked and as often he liked, and extracted his demands from Her. 'Mind!', he admonished one of his disciples, 'make Her listen to you when you say it! None of that cringing to Mother! Remember.' 'I am the child of the Divine Mother, the source of all power and strength. To me, cringing, fawning, whining, degrading inertia and hell are one and the same thing.' He, the preacher of strength and fearlessness liked to hurl himself with fury against Her sword, already red with the blood of hundreds.

His attitude is of great significance from a practical point of view, for it is intimately related to our life on earth. This world is a combination of both the mild and the terrible, the happy and the miserable, of joy and peace on one side and conflict and turmoil on the other. We cannot have the one without having the other too. Either we have both or none. But if we are to choose, Swami Vivekananda was for choosing the terrible, the miserable, the conflict and turmoil, for, according to him, in facing them boldly is our strength and greatness.

In his own life, we see that he never retracted, out of fear or favour, from the din and bustle of the battle. 'Two or three days before Sri Ramakrishna's passing away,' he told in a reminiscent mood to one of his disciples, 'She whom he used to call "Kālī" entered this body. It is She who takes me here and there and makes me work, without letting me remain quiet, or allowing me to look to my personal comforts.' Within and without, he was a veritable battlefield. Within was going on, on the one hand, a war of ideas trying to find solutions for the most pressing problems that faced his own country and the world, and on the other, a war between his tendency for meditation and scholarship and his tendency for losing himself in the service of humanity, not caring for his own salvation. Without, he had to battle with forces trying to thwart him in his efforts to lift humanity out of the morass in which it was struck up. But he delighted in fighting his way through, and, if necessary, dying heroically in this battle of life than withdraw from it in humiliation and defeat

That was his worship of the Divine Mother. 'O hero,' he exclaims in one of his letters, 'awake, and dream no more. Death has caught you by the forelock ... still fear not. What I have never done—fleeing from the battle—well, will that happen today? For fear of defeat, shall I retreat from the fight? Defeat is the ornament the hero adorns himself with. What, to acknowledge defeat without fighting! O Mother, Mother!'

Most of us speak of religion and spirituality. What is our idea of it? At the most, that we should withdraw ourselves into a forest or cave and there find God. Our reason? Oh! it is a hideous world, full of miseries and troubles. But Swamiji said: Hideous it is. But why be frightened by it and withdraw into the recesses of the forest? Why be afraid? This world, this sea of humanity, is the Divine Mother Herself, dancing Her beautiful dance—yes, even Her dance of destruction is beautiful if only we care to know. Even pain is pleasurable—if it is for the sake of others. Why, having come to worship Her, turn back in terror after throwing a garland round Her neck? Worship and serve Her as She is.

For Terror is Thy name,
 Death is in Thy breath,
 And every shaking step
 Destroys a world for e'er.
 Thou 'Time', the All-Destroyer!
 Come, O Mother, come!
 Who dares misery love,
 And hug the form of Death,
 Dance in Destruction's dance,
 To him the Mother comes.

O Mother, Thou art the destroyer of the troubles of Thy suppliants, Thou art the Mother of the universe. Let thy mercy be upon all. O Mother, Thou art the mistress of the universe. Thou art the one ruler of the moving and non-moving. Do Thou protect the universe and shower Thy mercy on all.

Devī-māhātmya, XI.2.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S SYNTHESIS OF SCIENCE AND RELIGION—3

SWAMI RANGANATHANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

THE VEDĀNTIC VIEW OF EVOLUTION

The Vedānta views the entire evolutionary process as progressive evolution of structure and form, and as greater and greater manifestation of the infinite Self within. It is evolution of matter and manifestation of spirit. Twentieth century biology recognizes, in the first appearance of living organisms, the emergence, in rudimentary form, of the spiritual value of awareness.

This spiritual value of awareness grows, as it were, in richness and variety as we move up the evolutionary ladder. The evolution of the nervous system discloses progressive development of awareness in depth and range, and consequent increase in the grip of the organism on its environment.

This awareness achieves a new and significant dimension with the appearance of man on the evolutionary scene. The field of awareness of all other organisms is, largely, the external environment and also, to a small extent, the interior of their bodies—the *without* of nature. Man alone has awareness of the self, along with awareness of the not-self, of both the *within* and *without* of nature.

That is the uniqueness of man, according to both twentieth century biology and ancient Vedānta. Self-awareness, which nature achieved through the evolution of the human organism, is a new dimension of awareness containing tremendous implications for man's destiny as much as for his philosophy of nature.

The Vedāntic view of evolution and of

man's uniqueness finds a classic statement in the *Bhāgavata* (XI. ix. 28):

*Sṛṣṭvā purāṇi vividhānyajayātmaśaktyā
Vṛkṣān sarīṣṭpapaśūn kṣagadamśa-
matsyān;*

*Taistaiḥ atuṣṭahṛdayaḥ puruṣam vidhāya
Brahmāvalokadhīṣṇaṁ mudam apa-
devaḥ—*

'The divine One, having projected (evolved) with His own inherent power various forms such as trees, reptiles, cattle, birds, insects, and fish, was not satisfied at heart with forms such as these; He then projected the human form endowed with the capacity to realize Brahman (the universal divine Self of all), and became extremely pleased.'

INDIA'S URGE: REALIZATION AND NOT MERE SPECULATION

Evolution has revealed that the mystery of existence stirs in man as the mystery of the self. The mystery of the universe will ever remain a mystery until this mystery of the self is cleared. Till then all our conclusions about the truth of the universe proceeding from science or philosophy, theology or logic, will be speculative ventures yielding mere postulates and conjectures. The Indian mind was not content to remain at the stage of speculation or conjecture in so important a field as the knowledge of the ultimate truth. Her thinkers boldly penetrated into the world within, taking the facts of awareness and the ego as the clue, as *footprints*, in the words of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (I. iv. 7); and when they penetrated to the

depth, they discovered the infinite and the eternal behind the finite and the time-bound. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (III. iv. 1) registers this approach, and the object of its search, in another significant passage :

Yat sākṣāt aparokṣāt Brahma ya Ātmā sarvāntarah—

'The Brahman that is immediate and direct—the Self that is within all.'

'That thou art' (*Tat tvam asi*), proclaims the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VI. viii. 7). Again and again, the Upaniṣads reiterate this great Truth. If man as scientist has such a profound dimension that he can comprehend the vast universe in a formula given by his thought, what must be the dimension of man as the Ātman, the unchangeable, infinite Self? The mystery of the universe was finally resolved through the discovery of the solution to the mystery within man himself. The sages of the Upaniṣads discovered the centre of the universe in the heart of man. Through that discovery, man was revealed in his infinite dimension; and the universe was also revealed in all its spiritual glory. Realization of this truth is the only way to life-fulfilment, say the Upaniṣads. Says the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (II. 15):

*Yadātmatattvena tu Brahmatattvam
Dīpōpameneha yuktaḥ prapaśyēt;
Ajām dhruvam sarvatattvair viśuddham
Jñātvā devān mucyate sarvāpārah—*

'When the self-controlled spiritual aspirant realizes in this very body the truth of Brahman (absolute Existence) through the truth of the Ātman (Self), self-luminous as light, then, knowing the Divinity which is unborn, eternal, and untouched by the modifications of nature, he is freed from all sins.'

This was a profound, joyous discovery, as can be seen even from the language in

which it is couched in the Upaniṣads. In reaching the ultimate Truth of the Ātman, they had reached also the ultimate of knowledge and awareness, peace and joy. Hence they communicated their discovery as the discovery of the inexhaustible mine of *satyam* (truth), *jñānam* (awareness), and *anantam* (infinitude), or of *sat* (existence), *cit* (knowledge) and *ānanda* (bliss). In the struggle to realize this truth and the life-fulfilment it involves, they saw the true meaning of the entire course of cosmic evolution, especially of human evolution.

The organism seeks fulfilment; that is the end and aim of all its activities and processes, says modern biology. In the Upaniṣads, we have the beautiful concepts of *mukti*, freedom, and *pūrṇatā*, fullness. We are bound now; we want to become integral, we must experience fullness. Jesus Christ calls it 'perfection': 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' (Matthew v. 48) To experience the delight of freedom, to enlarge the bounds of man's awareness, to get *bodhi*, complete enlightenment, as the Buddha expressed it, is the great aim of human evolution. Education, science, culture, socio-political processes, and religion are meant to increase and enlarge the bounds of this awareness and the range and depth of this fulfilment, by increasing man's knowledge of and control over not only the outside world but also the deep recesses within himself. Knowledge is power in the positive sciences; it is still more so in the science of religion, the science of the inner nature of man, where the power that is gained is not only greater in terms of quantity but also higher in terms of quality.

While living as a prisoner in St. Helena, Napoleon made this significant confession :

'There are in the world two powers—the sword and the spirit. The spirit has

always vanquished the sword.

'Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and I founded great empires. But upon what did the creation of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded his empire upon love, and to this very day, millions would die for him.'

VIVEKANANDA AND A SCIENCE OF HUMAN POSSIBILITIES

India developed religion as a science, as what Julian Huxley calls 'a science of human possibilities'. In this connexion, I can do no better than quote a significant passage from Swami Vivekananda; though rather long, it is worth quoting in full in view of its relevance.

In his speech on 'The Powers of the Mind' delivered in Los Angeles, California, on January 8, 1900, Swami Vivekananda said :

'Now, I shall tell you a theory, which I will not argue now, but simply place before you the conclusion. Each man in his childhood runs through the stages through which his race has come up; only the race took thousands of years to do it, while the child takes a few years. The child is first the old savage man, and he crushes a butterfly under his feet. The child is at first like the primitive ancestors of his race. As he grows, he passes through different stages until he reaches the development of his race. Only he does it swiftly and quickly. Now, take the whole of humanity as a race; or take the whole of the animal creation, man and the lower animals, as one whole. There is an end towards which the whole is moving. Let us call it perfection.

'Some men and women are born who anticipate the whole progress of mankind. Instead of waiting and being reborn over and over again for ages until the whole human race has attained to that perfection, they, as it were, rush through them in

a few short years of their life. And we know that we can hasten these processes, if we be true to ourselves. If a number of men, without any culture, be left to live upon an island, and are given barely enough food, clothing, and shelter, they will gradually go on and on, evolving higher and higher stages of civilization. We know, also, that this growth can be hastened by additional means.

'We help the growth of trees, do we not? Left to nature they would have grown, only they would have taken a longer time; we help them to grow in a shorter time than they would otherwise have taken. We are doing all the time the same thing, hastening the growth of things by artificial means. Why cannot we hasten the growth of man? We can do that as a race. Why are teachers sent to other countries? Because, by these means, we can hasten the growth of races. Now, can we not hasten growth of individuals? We can. Can we put a limit to the hastening? We cannot say how much a man can grow in one life. You have no reason to say that this much a man can do and no more. Circumstances can hasten him wonderfully. Can there be any limit then, till you come to perfection? So, what comes of it? That a perfect man, that is to say, the type that is to come of this race, perhaps millions of years hence, that man can come today. And this is what the *yogins* say, that all great incarnations and prophets are such men; that they reached perfection in this one life. We have had such men at all periods of the world's history and at all times. Quite recently, there was such a man (Sri Ramakrishna) who lived the life of the whole human race and reached the end even in this life.

'Even this hastening of the growth must be under laws. Suppose we can investigate these laws and understand their secrets and apply them to our own needs: it follows

that we grow. We hasten our growth, we hasten our development, and we become perfect, even in this life. This is the higher part of our life, and the science of the study of mind and its powers has this perfection as its real end. Helping others with money and other material things and teaching them how to go on smoothly in their daily life are mere details.

'The utility of this science is to bring out the perfect man, and not let him wait and wait for ages, just a plaything in the hands of the physical world, like a log of drift-wood carried from wave to wave and tossing about in the ocean. This science wants you to be strong, to take the work in your own hand, instead of leaving it in the hands of nature, and get beyond this little life. That is the great idea.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. II, pp. 18-19, 9th edition)

THE VEDĀNTIC MESSAGE OF STRENGTH AND FEARLESSNESS

Spiritual knowledge confers on man infinite strength and fearlessness. That is the best proof of its truth and utility. Referring to this, Swami Vivekananda said in his lecture on 'Vedānta and Its Application to Indian Life' delivered in Madras in 1897 :

'And in my mind rises from the past the vision of the great emperor of the West, Alexander the Great, and I see, as it were in a picture, the great monarch standing on the banks of the Indus, talking to one of our *sannyāsins* (monks) in the forest; the old man he was talking to, perhaps naked, stark naked, sitting upon a block of stone, and the Emperor, astonished at his wisdom, tempting him with gold and honour to come over to Greece. And this man smiles at his gold, and smiles at his temptations, and refuses; and then the Emperor standing on his authority as an Emperor, says, "I will kill you, if you do

not come", and the man bursts into a laugh and says, "You never told such a falsehood in your life as you tell just now. Who can kill me? *Me* you kill, Emperor of the material world! Never! For I am Spirit unborn and undecaying; never was I born and never do I die; I am the Infinite, the Omnipresent, the Omniscient; and you kill me, child that you are!" 'That is strength, that is strength.' (ibid., Vol. III, pp. 237-8, 8th edition)

Swami Vivekananda also gives as illustration of spiritual strength the example of an Indian monk who was stabbed by an English soldier during the Indian Mutiny of 1857. The Indian soldiers captured this English soldier and brought him before the dying monk to be identified and, if identified, offered to kill him in revenge. But the monk, who had realized his Self and his oneness with all beings, seeing his assailant before him, broke his silence of fifteen years to say to his murderer with his dying breath and in a tone suffused with love: 'And Thou also art He.'

The strength and fearlessness of Socrates in the face of death, and his gentleness, had its source in his spiritual knowledge. When Crito asked him: 'In what way shall we bury you, Socrates?', Socrates answered: 'In any way you like, but first you must catch *me*, the real me. Be of good cheer, my dear Crito, and say that you are burying my body only, and do with *that* whatever is usual and what you think best.' (*Dialogues of Plato*, Vol. I. p. 474, Jowett's edition, 1953)

If man is to live a true life, if he is to achieve real life-fulfilment, he has to manifest the infinite Self within him by controlling and transcending his lower self, his finite sense-bound nature. There is a technique for achieving this, and the religions of the world tell us about it with varying degrees of clarity. *But in India alone did this subject receive a treatment*

at once scientific and thorough in its spirit and methods, and impersonal and universal in its results and applications.

SCIENCE AND VEDĀNTA COMPLEMENTARY

Religion so expounded has a message for all humanity. Science through its technology may build for man a first class house, and equip it with radio, television, and other gadgets; the social security measures of a welfare state may provide him with everything necessary for a happy, fulfilled life in this world, and even, through the state church, in the world beyond; the man himself may give his house such arresting names as 'Śānti Kunj' (Peace Retreat), or 'Happy Villa'. Yet none of these can ensure that he will live in that house in peace or happiness. For that depends, to a large extent, on another source of strength and nourishment, another type of knowledge and discipline—the knowledge and discipline proceeding from religion. If man can have the help of the positive sciences to create a healthy external environment, and the help of the science of spirituality to create a healthy internal environment, he can hope to achieve total life-fulfilment; not otherwise. This is the view of the Upaniṣads.

But today this is not the picture that modern civilization presents. Man in this technological civilization is feeling inwardly impoverished and empty in an environment of wealth, power, and pleasure; he is full of tension and sorrow, doubt and uncertainty, all the time. Juvenile delinquency, drunkenness, suicide, and a variety of other maladies are ever on the increase. Why? Because man is not inwardly satisfied; he is smitten with ennui and boredom arising from the limitations of his sense-bound *Weltanschauung*. Indian thinkers foresaw this predicament of modern man ages ago. Says the *Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (VI. 20):

*Yadā carṁavad ākāśam veṣṭayiṣyanti
mānavāḥ;*

*Tadā Devam aviññāya dukkhasyānto
bhaviṣyati—*

'Men may (through their technical skill) roll up the sky like a piece of leather; still there will be no end of sorrow for them without realizing the luminous One within.'

Schopenhauer said a hundred years ago:

'All men who are secure from want and care, now that at last they have thrown off all other burdens, become a burden to themselves.' (*The World as Will and Idea*, Vol. I, p. 404)

Today, man is his own major burden and problem. He can tackle and solve this problem not by going in for more positivistic science, more technology, more life's amenities, more socio-political manipulation of human conditions, but by the cultivation of the science of religion, by the understanding and practice of this science. Said Swami Vivekananda: 'You must bear in mind that religion does not consist in talk, or doctrines, or books, but in realization; it is not learning but *being*.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. IV, p. 35, 8th edition)

It is in this sense that India understood religion; and it is this idea of religion that Swami Vivekananda expounded in the West and the East through his powerful voice. The end and aim of religion, as our ancient teachers put it, is the experience, *anubhava*, of God, through the steady growth in man's spiritual awareness. *That is the touchstone of religion.* There is such a thing as the spiritual growth of the individual, step by step. We experience this growth, just as we see a building rising up step by step, brick by brick. When we live the life of religion, strength comes to us, consciousness becomes enlarged, sympathies grow and widen, and we feel that we are

growing into better men. It is only the strength that proceeds from such inward growth and development that will enable man to digest and assimilate the energies released by the progress of science. Such a one alone has the strength and wisdom to convert the chaos of life into a pattern of happiness and general welfare. If religion is taken away from society, what remains is simple barbarism. Ancient civilizations were destroyed by barbarians bred outside those civilizations. But modern civilization, if it is to go the same way, will be destroyed by barbarians bred within the civilization itself. What can save us from this predicament is a little 'Christian love' in our hearts for our neighbours, in the words of Bertrand Russell (*Impact of Science on Society*, p. 114), or a little more altruism, in the words of Pitirim A. Sorokin of Harvard University (*Reconstruction of Humanity*, especially part V). This love comes from the *practice* of religion, as defined by Swami Vivekananda and other great teachers of the world. Says Vivekananda: 'Religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. IV, p. 358, 8th edition) Again: 'Him I call a *mahātman* (great soul) whose heart bleeds for the poor, otherwise he is a *durātman* (wicked soul).' (*ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 58, 7th edition)

That is the function of religion; the finite man reaches out to the infinite man. No other discipline can give this education to man.

'Now comes the question, can religion really accomplish anything?', asked Swami Vivekananda, and proceeded to answer:

'It can. It brings to man eternal life. It has made man what he is and will make of this human animal a god. That is what religion can do. Take religion from human society and what will remain? Nothing but a forest of brutes. Sense-happiness is

not the goal of humanity. Wisdom (*jñāna*) is the goal of all life. We find that man enjoys his intellect more than an animal enjoys its senses; and we see that man enjoys his spiritual nature even more than his rational nature. So the highest wisdom must be this spiritual knowledge. With this knowledge will come bliss.' (*ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 4, 8th edition)

CONCLUSION

Understood in this light, there is no conflict between science and religion. Both have the identical aim of helping man to grow in spirituality, of ushering in a better social order which alone can provide him with the stimulus to total life-fulfilment. Each by itself is insufficient and helpless. They have been tried separately with unsatisfactory results. The old civilizations took guidance solely from religion; their achievements were partial and limited. Modern civilization relies solely on science; its achievements also have turned out to be partial and limited. The combination today of the spiritual energies of these two complementary disciplines in the life of man will produce fully integrated human beings and thus help to evolve a complete human civilization for which the world is ripe and waiting. This is the most outstanding contribution of Swami Vivekananda to human thought today. This synthetic vision of his finds lucid expression in a brief but comprehensive testament of his Vedāntic faith:

'Each soul is potentially divine.

'The goal is to manifest this divine within by controlling nature, external and internal.

'Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy—by one, or more, or all of these—and *be free*.

'This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples,

or forms, are but secondary details.' (ibid., Vol. I, p. 124, 11th edition)

The Vedānta expounded by Vivekananda as the synthesis of science and religion is also the synthesis of head and heart, of the classical and the romantic in the human heritage. The erstwhile tendency in modern education to treat the humanities and the sciences as mutually exclusive disciplines is giving place to the Vedāntic awareness that they are complementary to each other. Himself 'the personification of the harmony of all human energy', in the words of Romain Rolland which I have quoted at the beginning of this paper, Vivekananda has bequeathed to man, in a moving passage, his vision of the unity and synthesis of all human energy and aspiration. Making a prophetic reference to the future religion of humanity in the course of his

lecture on 'The Absolute and Manifestation' delivered in London in 1896, he said :

'In Buddha, we had the great universal heart, and infinite patience, making religion practical, and bringing it to everyone's door. In Śaṅkarācārya, we saw tremendous intellectual power, throwing the scorching light of reason upon everything. We want to-day that bright sun of intellectuality joined with the heart of Buddha, the wonderful, infinite heart of love and mercy. This union will give us the highest philosophy. Science and religion will meet and shake hands. Poetry and philosophy will become friends. This will be the religion of the future, and if we can work it out, we may be sure that it will be for all times and peoples.' (*The Complete Works*, Vol. II, p. 140, 10th edition)

VINOBA BHAVE: THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF HIS SOCIAL REFORMS—3

DR. JACQUES-ALBERT CUTTAT

(Continued from the previous issue)

Here lies the first major difficulty in the way of Vinobaism. If imperturbable patience, serenity in suffering, stoic acceptance of persecution, a natural disposition towards acts of unselfishness and universal goodwill, are Indian virtues which derive from non-violence, then it also has its counterpart in 'non-action', an ideal which is common to Buddhism as well as to Hinduism. This is admittedly a contemplative virtue, but it tends to promote in everyday life an attitude and a mentality that are asocial, even perhaps antisocial, that is to say, diametrically opposed

to the reform of Vinoba. Moreover, Vinoba incessantly exhorts his 'social workers' not to confuse non-violence with its many deceptive facets which might appear to resemble it; namely, indolence when it is necessary to act; submission when it is necessary to react; absence of initiative when it is necessary to invent; depreciation of time—this tendency so typically Indian of remaining the spectator—at the very moment when the temporal imposes urgent duties; insensitivity in the face of the needs of our fellow men; in short, passivity. There is no better way of sum-

marizing his views than by the phrase 'active non-violence', which he has coined in order to ward off immobilism; it favours, in accordance with his own commentaries, a social *activity denuded of activist agitation*, in the precise measure in which this proceeds: more from a *detachment denuded of indifference*, that is to say, remains truly non-violent. ('Active Non-violence' is the title of a chapter from *Democratic Values*, Kashi, 1962, p. 149) Universal sympathy displayed in its concrete form in the vicissitudes of daily humble toil in the service of the village;¹ efficacious devotion springing out of inner peace; control over the self while feeling for the suffering of one's brethren—all these are so many aspects of a *paradoxical tension* of the conscience, a tension that is all the more fruitful for the fact that one succeeds further in uniting the two 'poles' in a harmony which surmounts the opposition between the 'I' and the 'non-I'. This permits, says he, the realization through and in action, of the 'experience of *samādhi* (mystical rapture) while living one's daily life'. (*Science and Self Knowledge*, op. cit., p. 38) Vinoba subscribes to these words of Tukārāma: 'When will I see all beings become one, all become society, all become Brahma?' (ibid.) Utopian futurism or mystical vision? Undoubtedly both: Indian 'utopianism' is always mystical.

It can be seen that the practice of 'active non-violence' surpasses and transforms that of the classic *karma-yoga*, or 'spiritual realization through action', in so far as this last, if it is true that it unites inner detachment with daily activity, remains none the less definitely orientated towards oneself and not towards the fellow creature in himself, as is precisely the case

with 'active non-violence' and with Christian charity. It was essential to make this point in order to understand the extent of the revolutionary aspect entailed in attempting a junction of the afore-mentioned extremes, on the part of a sage who is so profoundly Hindu.

Vinoba, moulded by Gandhi, furnished the example of this synthesis *sui generis* which he teaches, and that too to peasants! His is a contagious and sublime example which, as with Gandhi, has inevitably provoked deviations, defections, failures, and the sceptic or ironic reactions of which I have spoken. In certain respects, his example is more difficult to follow than that of the Mahatma in his political struggle, for the latter's non-violence was of a defensive nature and consisted in 'isolating' the guilty conscience of the colonial power; that of Vinoba, independence having been acquired, has to be constructive and requires to detect and combat in *oneself* the lack of social conscience, without deriving from it any benefit other than *sarvodaya*, 'the welfare of all'. Neither the immediate results nor even the approaching perspectives of Vinobaism are sufficient criteria by which to judge, since it is a characteristic of great figures to remain actively present in history up to the end of time and often to reveal the extent of their efficacy only long after their death; and Vinoba would not be the follower of Gandhi, if he did not think that his people are capable, *in principle*, of following his example, that they are even perhaps the only one among all peoples who are 'gifted' to such an extent for one day practising 'active non-violence' on a national scale; however far away that day may be, from a human point of view, that day new India will astonish, relieve, and stimulate, for the second time in the world, the conscience of all men of goodwill.

The second obstacle, connected with the

¹ Cf. for example, in *Thoughts on Education* (Rajghat, 1959, p. 241): 'A universal benevolence which does not discern an enemy in anyone, combined with the act of serving one's *immediate neighbour*.'

first, makes us look beyond the frontiers of the Indian subcontinent. It is concerned with the antithetic character of the East and the West, of which contemporary India represents one of the important cross-roads.

In order that the social progress towards which this country is directing itself should not remain superficial, but should be durable, it is indispensable that it takes on a form adapted to the particular appearance and to the specific structure of the living forces of Indianity. This is to say that it must, in one way or another, give a central place to the *spiritual aspirations* that are so characteristic of Indian sensitivity, that it must integrate these, 'gather them up'. Here lies precisely the second paradox that Gandhi and Vinoba have had the courage to face. Indeed, whereas the western mentality, in the name of its Greco-Roman tradition incorporated in the spirituality born of the Bible, conceives of the world as being real and desired by God, entrusted to man in order that he should transform and improve it, the spiritual tradition of India—much more alive than is believed by so many economic and political experts—enjoins, to the contrary, not that man should venture into the world in order to transfigure it, but that he should break loose from it and turn 'within himself'. We find ourselves face to face with two spiritual orientations whose *interior directions* are in a manner, turned *in opposite ways*. The result is that one of the tasks of Vinoba Bhave consists in overcoming a dilemma that the great social reformers of the West did not have to face, i.e. how in the name of Hindu tradition, to direct the Indian soul towards the acceptance of the value of the exterior world which this same tradition teaches them to disparage. To solve this contradiction, to overcome this dilemma, it would be necessary that

the oriental, and particularly the Hindu human structure, essentially 'introvert' on the three levels: economic, social, and spiritual, should enter into a compromise with the western, and particularly the Christian, human outlook, which is essentially 'introvert' on these three levels.² In other words, it would be necessary that India should assimilate not only the material riches and the science of the West, but that she should consent to draw from the fountain-head of the values which were at the source of these riches, that is to say, from the 'soul', the mentality, the spiritual tradition of the West, a tradition that India is unaware of, that she disregards or discredits, and which, in any case, seems to contradict her own. Now, it has not been sufficiently noted that the work of Vinoba Bhave is precisely, in many ways, a powerful effort, started by Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishna, and Gandhi, pursued by Tagore, Aurobindo, Radhakrishnan, and others, aiming at uniting on the Indian soil in a concrete synthesis, the aforesaid divergent 'dimensions' or 'directions' of the East and of the West, an effort towards showing that in reality these two antithetic attitudes do not exclude each other,

² I am borrowing from psychology the terms 'introversion' and 'extroversion' in order to sharpen and heighten the contrast; the first marks a conception and a sensitivity in accordance with which at every point (personal, social, religious) man 'realizes himself' by aspiring towards an *interiority* coextensive to the cosmos and in which all consciences, human or pre-human, blend and coincide; the second evokes schematically the opposite and complementary perspective or sensitivity according to which man 'realizes himself' by aspiring unceasingly towards a *transcendence* never attained, that is to say, accomplishes itself by passing beyond itself towards 'the other in his capacity as the other', whether that being be God, the fellow creature, or the pre-human universe. I shall content myself by summarizing here in a very succinct fashion the theme of my two following studies: *The Spiritual Dialogue of East and West* with a preface by Mr. Nehru (Max Mueller Bhavan, New Delhi, 1961) and *Die geistige Bedeutung Asiens und des Abendlandes füreinander* (Münchener Universitätsreden, Max Huber Verlag, 1961).

but rather are complementary to each other and are expected to enrich each other.

Before evoking this neglected or unnoticed aspect of Vinobaism, and in order to assign to it its proper place, let us not forget that a task which is so arduous and so lengthy will not lack in detractors who, moreover, oppose it for two diametrically contrary reasons. These are, on the one hand, the numerous de-Christianized westerners and westernized or de-Hinduized Indians, for whom a synthesis of this sort is something in the domain of a myth or a mirage. If one were to believe them, the spiritual traditions inherited by India—Hinduism and Buddhism—are out-dated, incurably dead, and the sole means for South-East Asia to survive would be to replace these at once by an 'enlightened' agnosticism, a purely scientific and technological pragmatism, whose triumphal march the East would no more than the West be able to stop today. There would no longer be any alternative but to let Asia sink into a materialism with a vague touch of humanitarian morality. This dogmatic and dialectical materialism, Jayaprakash Narayan, thanks to Gandhi and Vinoba, finally disowned, because, as he wrote, one does not see on what principles it can still found itself in order to justify logically ethical values³ and allow them to be freely respected. And at the other extreme, there are the Asiatic 'reactionaries' for whom the sole way to conserve their cultural heritage is to render it impervious to any western influence. These retire within the shell of their own past; they placidly await the return of the 'golden age' (*satyayuga*), certain that it will flourish

again on the day when, striking at last the finishing blow at the iron age, the 'dark age' (*Kaliyuga*) which we are going through, modern civilization will have destroyed itself by means of its own murderous instruments. But there are also in the two hemispheres those for whom it is precisely this false alternative between an 'earthly' paradise and a 'disembodied' spiritualism, between a 'robot'-West and a 'lotus'-East, which is tainted with unreality; because both these reduce the real to one of its two 'halves', to the exclusion of the other. If one tries, they say, to encircle the whole of reality—material and immaterial—within a horizon that is both more vast and more concrete, one foresees that the West owes it to itself to search in the East for that eastern wisdom which recalls man to his own depths, just as it searches for raw material, tropical products, and the outlets that it needs. On contact with this wisdom, the extroverted westerner is led to regain awareness of his own spiritual heritage, so neglected in our time and to revive it, renew and widen its horizons. At the same time, one sees that reciprocally, the representatives of the West, in the full sense of the word, can and must give to Asia, in harmony with the sciences and techniques that are indispensable to its biological survival, human, moral, and spiritual—and particularly biblical—values and truths that the East must also on its part learn to accept and to unite into her own, in order to be able to adapt her soul, *without mutilating it*, to the exigencies of the modern world. From one end of the globe to the other, enlightened spirits are discovering that the vocation of the two hemispheres, in spite of their irreducible differences, is not reciprocal exclusion, nor the absorption of one by the other, nor their simple coexistence, but their *convergence* towards a Focus that is transcending in its attraction, common

³ 'Communism such as it has developed in Russia and such as it is developing now in China represents the darkness of the soul and the imprisonment of the spirit, a colossal sum of violence and injustice ...', that is to say, the exact opposite of the 'active non-violence' of its master. (Quoted by Welles Hangan, op. cit., p. 216)

to all humanity and capable of sweeping it into its concretely universal orbit. The characteristic of such a convergence would be to cause a blossoming of what it unites, to replace antagonism or indifference by exchanges continuously more fruitful on either side, by a true planetary osmose of at the same time material, cultural, and spiritual character, that is to say, fully human. For in every true dialogue, in every interpenetration or exchange in depth—whether this be inter-personal or inter-cultural—each of the partners becomes incessantly more aware of himself as well as of the other, both helping each other to become more themselves. To a larger extent we see developing and strengthening the perspective of which we are speaking, among sociologists, historians, orientalists, scholars of philosophy and comparative religions, theologians and scientists, representatives of UNESCO, and last but not least, more and more numerous promoters and pioneers of technical assistance, of technical and human co-operation. It crops up incessantly in the writings and speeches of Vinoba, as if he were bringing out the fact that only an authentic inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue, only the convergence of entire humanity is capable of extracting his people out of the dilemma that we have described. Here are some indications of this.

The spokesmen of Hindu spirituality—Indians or westerners—are in the habit of presenting the solitary, impersonal, and disembodied interiority of the Advaitic school as being the last word on Hinduism, even of being the last word on all religions, including biblical monotheism (from which, therefore, India would have nothing to learn). Vinoba, on his part, has learnt from Gandhi to receive inspiration from the example of Christ and particularly to put into practice the Sermon on the Mount

which is the very opposite of Advaitic impersonalism. What is more, this devout Hindu—one of his best friends has confided this to me—not content with speaking all the languages of his country and with having learnt Arabic and Persian in order to read in the original the Koran and the Iranian mystics, has started to learn Hebrew—a fact without precedent in India, as far as I know—in order to permit himself to be more deeply penetrated by the reading of the Bible. The biblical personalism and the ‘social’ dimension of Christianity seem to have left a deeper mark on him even than Buddhism, even though he regards this latter very highly. One can see in this fact one of the major reasons why he tries, as did Tagore, to find again in his own tradition, in order to revive them, teachings capable of ‘opening out’ a way for the Indian soul to love his fellow men and the objective world. This is done *at the same level of Vedāntic interiority*, which, of itself, tends to close in upon itself. He desires to communicate to his listeners his own inter-religious horizon through the intermediary of texts with which they are familiar. He quotes, for example, the following exclamation, by nature more Christian than Hindu, of Prahlāda, an ancient Hindu sage: ‘But I for myself do not want to be liberated alone, leaving these poor folk all to themselves’; and he comments on it thus: ‘My liberation is a contradiction in terms, if I want that I become wise and the others persist in ignorance, I would be thereby losing my liberation.’ (*Science and Self Knowledge*, op. cit., p. 64) One finds similar texts in the Buddhism of the Great Vehicle, but what one does not find in the Buddhist world—any more than among the adepts of the ‘yoga of action’ of whom we have talked—is the putting into practice of this perspective in the Vinobaian sense of ‘active non-violence’, of the conjunction

between detachment and 'universal sympathy' with the 'service to the immediate neighbour'. One searches there in vain for this synthesis, or 'paradoxical tension', of a *spiritual* nature, between an attitude of the western type and an attitude of the Asiatic type. A synthesis of this type, such as we have discerned in Vinobaian writings, reveals itself then to be, in fact if not in doctrine, a remarkably original inter-religious synthesis between an essentially biblical approach and a Hindu approach.

Thus can be explained a fact which at first sight seems surprising. Vinoba, pious Hindu though he is, openly reproaches his countrymen for believing that Hindu spirituality is an unsurpassable summit, and for not seeing that Hinduism also is called upon to 'progress' just like science. (*Science and Self Knowledge*, op. cit., p. 62. We are not discussing here the validity of this comparison.) He is the author of this aphorism famous in India: 'We are passing from the era of politics and religion to the era of science and spirituality.' (ibid., p. 36) This phrase so evidently abrupt, must not be taken literally: 'politics' and 'religion' should be understood in a partial and pejorative sense (power for the sake of power on the one hand, ritualism and exclusivism on the other); what should be retained from it is that science by definition stretches beyond national, ethnic, and cultural frontiers and that spirituality resembles it in this that it is a human dimension common to and underlying the most different of religions. In this respect, they are henceforth complementary and called upon, each at its own level, to serve together as a connecting link between all

men *in their nature as men*. Without spirituality, Vinoba pointed out to one of my informers, science is amoral, inhuman: united with spirituality, on the other hand, it becomes 'non-violent', pacifying, a providential source of the ideal state which he describes in his own phrase as: Samya Yoga; integral union; or more exactly, according to his own commentary: universal convergence. (Cf. *Bhoodan-Yajna*, op. cit., p. 40) The Samya Yoga is very close to what he names elsewhere as *power of peace*. 'I work', he writes, 'in order that people should understand that *peace* has an independent value and a power that is capable of solving their problems...'. (Quoted by Suresh Ram: *Vinoba and His Mission*, Rajghat, Kashi, 1962, p. 458) I think I have shown sufficiently that Vinoba only conceives of this peace a value that is more congenial to Asia than to Europe, as united with justice, a value and a virtue more in harmony with the genius of the West.

It is seen that the dual confrontation that I have just commented upon—past-present, East-West—unites finally into a single problem: how to spare modern India the division of her soul, the emotional, cultural, spiritual, political 'schizophrenia'. The two remedies commented by Vinobaism—active non-violence, inwardness open to transcendence—converge in turn towards a single aim, common to the two hemispheres, that is to say, the promotion of the person, whose blossoming out necessitates and calls for a simultaneous development of his two complementary dimensions: autonomy and interdependence, self-possession and opening out to the other, liberty and responsibility.

THE SPIRITUAL FUNCTION OF LITERATURE

PROFESSOR G. S. BANHATTI

Man is distinguished from other creatures mainly by his immensely advanced mental life. A hungry man and a hungry dog will eat, perhaps, with the same ravenous ferocity; but the dog's life will not register a major event till his next meal, whereas the man's will barely have commenced with the eating. The pleasures and pains of man do not end with the fulfilment of bodily needs; only the area of his sensitivity is shifted from the body to the mind. A well-stuffed man may feel as sad due to mental agony, such as an insult or a dear one's death, as a starving man due to lack of food. That the incidence of suicide is not necessarily less in rich countries like the United States of America than in poor countries like India is but an indication of this.

Just as man builds up and rears his own physical world comprising his wife and children, he builds up a mental world comprising his feelings, thoughts, sympathies, ideals, and so on. To a great extent, in most cases, the latter is coeval with the former in the sense that his sympathies and thoughts are circumscribed by the members of his physical world. Yet, even the meanest man has an exclusive mental life. In certain unusual moments, he finds himself plunging in remote imaginative recesses untouched by his physical life; here a victim of a tragedy may make him sad, the joy of a character in a novel may delight him. Describing this psychological fact, Stout says: 'Even the savage is by no means always in a strenuously practical mood. He has his time for play as well as for work, and among other forms of play, he indulges in the play of ideas. When he is comfortable and idle, it gives him pleasure to represent things, not as they are, have

been, or will be, but as he would like them to be, or in any way which may happen to interest him. He may communicate his imaginings to his comrades, and they may be handed down from generation to generation. Such works as the plays of Shakespeare or the novels of Thackeray are examples in the most advanced development in this mode of activity.' (*A Manual of Psychology*, p. 601, 4th edition)

LITERATURE AN AID TO THE REALIZATION OF ULTIMATE REALITY

The mental world of a human being happens to be the medium of his realization of the ultimate reality, of his self-negation, of his spiritual solace. Man knows, then he feels, and when he starts acting according to what he knows and feels, realization dawns. All this activity has little to do with his body, except that its satisfactory maintenance is a prerequisite. It takes place in his mental world, and transcends it. This world of the mind is a sort of parallel creation, like the *pratisṛṣṭi* (rival creation) of Viśvāmitra. Here one indulges in one's idealistic visions, one's fond fancies, one's wiry whims. The imagination acts as the primary engineer of this invisible creation. Generally speaking, men of the moment lead a richer and intenser mental life than ordinary men. Indeed, the mental life of the great serves to enrich and feed that of lesser mortals. The most widely effective method of this process is literature. Great literary artists weave factual noble lives and those taking shape in their imagination into the grand texture of light-shedding literature—characters, scenes, thoughts, and so on. Great literature is thus a major aid to the attainment of the ultimate purpose of

human life; it is a step towards the culmination of a process of evolution seemingly ordained by nature. In the lives of most readers, and in those of some writers like Bacon, it is a saving grace.

The ultimate reality in life seems to defy recognition in the absence of a suitable standard of comparison; for we recognize things only by comparing them with like ones and distinguishing them. Literature provides standards which we juxtapose against those in actual life; consciously or unconsciously, we compare vision in literature with fact in actual life, and often experience a profounder reality in literature than in actual life. We may not come in contact with a Śakuntalā or a Cārudatta or a Hamlet in our sensate life; nevertheless, these invisible, beyond-the-grave persons represent a higher, less fickle, more desirable world than our everyday eat-and-drink world. Hold these luminous creations of literature close to your heart, live in them, and you have stepped on the path of ultimate reality. Ennobling literature may not tally in its details with the self-soaked sensuous life around us; but, to adopt Bhavabhūti a little, it is the objective, material life that has to model itself on the broad pattern laid down by benevolent torch-bearers, literary and other, and not the other way round. Cārudatta's declaring his dauntless courage to face death strikes a noble chord in our hearts. He says in *Mṛcchakatika* (Act X):

Na bhīto maraṇādasmi kevalam dūṣitam yaśaḥ;

Viśuddhasyāpi me mṛtyuḥ putrajanmasamaḥ kila—

'Not afraid of death am I; only my fair name has been tarnished. My fair name intact, death will be as joyous as the birth of a son.'

When Mitya, in Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, sentenced to death

for a murder, enjoys a short sleep resting his head on a pillow placed there by a stranger, when all others have contemptuously deserted him, and awakes exclaiming in gratitude, 'I have slept well', flood-gates of universal love burst open irresistibly in our hearts. Devotional literature, especially, makes us forget ourselves and think of God. Now, it is given only to a few to see, to talk to, and to derive inspiration from a real scene like Mitya's or from a living hero or devotee. What about others not fortunate enough to get such an opportunity? They should knock the doors of great literature. It is always at our elbow to perform its spiritual function. Colossal men in flesh and blood stride this earth only at very long intervals; godly men in literature are ever present in our midst to make God intelligible to us.

THE ONWARD MARCH TO UNBOUNDED LOVE OF HUMANITY

Sanskrit critics have invariably held spiritual solace as one of the highest objectives of literature. Ānandavardhana in his *Dhvanyāloka* and Mammaṭa in his *Kāvya-prakāśa* lay great stress on this. The bliss of poetry is the twin of spiritual bliss (*kāvya-ānandaḥ Brahmānandasahodaraḥ*), they declare. All arts including literature are reflections of the Absolute; they are tangibles in terms of which one is blessed with a glimpse of the Intangible, otherwise eluding the senses. It is interesting to note that the attention bestowed upon literature by the ancient Hindus ranges from this serene attitude to amusing practical instructions to book-owners, such as:

Tailād rakṣet jalād rakṣet rakṣet śithi-labandhanāt;

Mūrkhahaste na dātavyam etadvadati pustakam—

'The book says: "Protect me from oil,

from water, from getting loose, and don't hand me over to a fool."'

In great literature, feelings and thoughts, shorn of their physical surroundings, are idealized. The imagination of the writer accumulates experiences of everyday life, and his creative faculty abstracts, universalizes, and expresses them. In our sensate life, even our deepest emotions are restricted to a narrow circle, are conditioned by and passionately attached to persons. Love, therefore, so much depends on physical beauty, and is often another name for jealousy, the dominating anxiety for exclusive overlordship. Such virtues as perseverance, magnanimity, and sacrifice are rarely extended beyond the narrow groove of family. Our dependants are the easy butts of our wrath, none else need fear it much. But in grand literature, feelings born in one breast ultimately overflow individuals and embrace the universe. The love of Śakuntalā for Duṣyanta caused mainly by physical attraction is etherealized in the seventh act of *Sakuntala*. The love of a common cooing pair rarely runs such a course in actuality. The terror generated by Macbeth is universalized towards the end of the play; the rejoicings on his death are professedly universal. The storms raging in aged Lear's breast are, indeed, typical of universalization of feelings. The old king bearing the burden of individual grievances comes face to face with the sufferings of people in his kingdom, and sheds tears over the plight of humanity; private calamity assumes a public perspective here. Finally, he retrieves his self-abused fatherhood by seeking solace in his daughter, Cordelia, whom he has earlier slighted. The play, from this angle, is an appealing instance of universalization of love and sympathy, of genuine repentance which presupposes self-effacement. Lofty literature loosens the bind-

ing strings of our limited affinities, and idealizes them by evaporating their selfish content. This process must be experienced to be believed. Through this process, great literature supports us on our onward march toward spirituality, which is but another name for unbounded love of humanity—spirituality existing beyond such labels as God, prophet, and others, spirituality which inspired so-called atheists like Isvar Chandra Vidyasagar and Agarkar.

A GREAT WRITER IS A SEER TOO

From this point of view, the dictum of Aristotle that plausible impossibilities are more striking than possible implausibilities assumes a new and significant import. Impossibilities do not belong to the sensate world, they are unworldly; but this by itself does not glorify them. Wild impossibilities would be stark distortions, and therefore unimaginative. Those filtered through and moulded by a noble imagination are rendered plausible. They are strongly instrumental in diverting our minds away from the material world of possibilities, and glue them to a world impossible from the sensuous standpoint, but intensely real owing to its plausibility. On the other hand, a possible but implausible literary world may be close to sensuous reality, but may be insipid and uninspiring, and hence spiritually and artistically arid. In modern criticism, there is a loud talk of realism and surrealism, and we sometimes judge literary worth by the criterion of faithfulness to actual life. Waves of surrealists and symbolists may pass on the surface, but great literary masters like Shakespeare, Kālidāsa, Dante, and Goethe, with all their impossible ghosts and hells and *ākāśavānīs*, continue to constitute the cherished heights of literary achievement as ever.

As a matter of fact, whatever we admire and respect borders on the unattainable.

An ideal would cease to be one, if it slides in the range of easy possibility. A vision must soar high beyond hard physical reality; it carries its own credentials, it does not need logical proof. When Shelley, for instance, says :

Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity,

you are wrong if you ask him to prove his statement. The poet is not out to argue his case; he fathoms the essential reality with his own individual intensity, and tries to make you see it. A great writer is always a great seer. The seer sees, he need not discuss. Of *Māyā*, for example, Swami Vivekananda says that it is not a theory to explain something; it is just a statement of fact. Compare this assertion with a philosophical dissertation on *Māyā*, and you know the difference between the seer and the philosopher. A great writer is essentially a seer; he need not be a philosopher. Poets, as Shelley declares, are the unacknowledged legislators of the world, not because of the conscious influence they wield, but because of the ethereal joy they share with the reader. This joy imperceptibly moulds the reader's sensibility, and influences his spiritual life.

LITERATURE AS EXPRESSION OF THE INEXPRESSIBLE

Although great literature takes a willing adherent to a state in which contact with the sensate life is suspended, it is by no means enough to endow him with the highest spiritual experience. All spiritual experience is too deep for words; words may circumvent it, may beat ferociously round the bush, may at best describe its outer manifestations, they can never express it. Words, indeed, like paper currency, carry their agreed connotation. A dictionary can give you a synonym for *cow*, but cannot tell you what a cow is; only a look at the quadruped can do that. De-

scription in words of a sensate experience, like the sight of a blackboard, can be understood, because everyone has a tallying experience in his store; a blind man cannot understand what an experience of seeing means. Non-sensate, spiritual experiences have a different tale to tell—in fact, that there is none! Here an overwhelming majority have no tallying experience in store. In the domain of spirituality, therefore, real communication is restricted to a few; among them, silence speaks with a thousand tongues, closed eyes see immense visions, mute lips convey lofty volumes. As the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (II. 4) says: From the highest spiritual reality words return defeated. Spiritual ecstasy opens up vast avenues of inexpressible bliss, dispels all doubts.

Nevertheless, many a soul reposing in spiritual ecstasy tries to translate its experience in the nearest verbal terms. All devotional literature, so abundant in Sanskrit, Hindi, and other Indian languages, is a sweet testimony to this effort. The need to fit inexpressible experiences in acceptable patterns of words and ideas gives rise to similes, metaphors, and other paraphernalia. The result is a lovely literature, remarkable for its sincerity of emotion and beautiful, original idiom. The poetry of saints like Jñāneśvara, Caitanya, and Tulasīdāsa belongs to this immortal category. Here the writer is predominantly an interpreter, a medium through which his inner world is presented to the reader.

BENEFICIAL INFLUENCE OF LITERATURE ON THE READER AND THE WRITER

These efforts are often as rewarding to himself as to the reader. Only a small fraction of the imaginative world of a human being is composed of physical experiences; a very large part is composed of feelings and thoughts, of love and hatred,

of ideas and ideals. This is true even of a writer devoted to an eat-drink-and-be-merry life. The creative process necessarily involves abstraction of the writer's physical and mental experiences, much more intensely than that in the case of the reader; for, though literature is a two-sided process, the writer is its active agent, and the reader only a passive participant. Abstraction always leads one away from the senses, toward the spirit. Great literature, therefore, exerts spiritually beneficial influence not only on the reader, but also on the writer, and this latter to a much greater extent. Even as a generous donor elevates himself while helping the needy, a great writer advances himself spiritually while undergoing the creative process. All his faculties are concentrated on creating, leaving little room for down-to-earth selfish feelings. His memory brushes away senseless experiences, and treasures details of other people's lives. And 'memory is the root of creative genius'. 'It enables the poet to connect the immediate moment of perception, which is called inspiration, with past moments in which he has received like impressions.' (Stephen Spender: *World within World*, p. 58) Writers and other artists are often accused of inactivity, but their faculties like memory are busy, when their limbs seem motionless. They are, in the words of Keats, God's spies, unerring observers. Through keen but detached, unselfish observation and attractive expression, they infuse 'meaning in an insignificant trifle in God's world, and often prick the inflated bubble of superficial importance, reducing it to nothingness. With a piercing insight, they call spade a spade, thus making strides towards a comprehension of reality.

SACRED OBLATION AT THE FEET OF THE ALMIGHTY

Many a great writer has undergone a

spiritual crisis prior to taking to the pen. The delivery from his dark years was but a signal for the flowering of Carlyle's literary genius. The literary urge of Bhartṛhari, Tulasīdāsa, and a host of others synchronized with the advent of their passion for God. The writings of these writers are but declared, sacred oblations at the feet of the Almighty; all good writing is so in effect, though not expressly declared. These writers undertake to write as part of their spiritual mission, and believe in the essentially spiritual nature of every literary endeavour. Carlyle places the hero as a man of letters at the vanguard of the modern world, 'since it is the spiritual always that determines the material', and it is the writer who is concerned most with the spiritual and least with the material. A king is hero to his countrymen; a great writer to the world. In the true literary man, there is a sacredness, he is the light of the world. Following Fichte, Carlyle beautifully characterizes literature as continuous revelation of the Godlike in the terrestrial and common. All honest work is worship, and literature is intensely so. Political power has always admired literature, and scorners of literature have lived to know better. Kālidāsa rides in a brilliant train of glory; his royal patrons follow only as tail-lights. The sun has long set on the British Empire, but Shakespeare's empire grows larger with every sun. When Pitt was approached for some government help to the poet Burns, the politician refused to oblige, saying, 'Literature will take care of itself'. The poet Southey replied: 'Yes, it will take care of itself, and of you too, if you do not look to it!'

TRANSFORMATION OF PERSONALITY AND THE CREATIVE ARTIST

Becoming, not being, is the fulcrum of religion, and of all spiritual progress. Material progress, on the other hand,

consists in being what one is and making changes in matter—a palace replaces a hut, a sofa a foot-loose stool; but the man remains the same. On the contrary, spiritual progress envisages change in the inner core of man; and literature performs a yeoman service in this regard. For great literature liberates us from the surrounding physical environments. Thoughts and emotions, and their bearers in fiction, thrive without having to eat and sleep; even their mundane anxieties are not of the body, but of the mind. They indirectly impress on us the non-compelling nature of physical needs. Art has always been involved in a struggle between the aesthetic and the useful, or, in other words, the spiritual and the mundane; and great art has not been instrumental to man's mundane advancement. Truth and beauty have all along been the passions of great writers; they are, to the discerning vision, synonymous with God. Great writers visualize beauty in apparent ugliness, their seeing eye can sense loveliness in ordinary, seemingly insignificant objects. Their originality often consists in stressing eternal, age-old values; there can be no original thought in the sense of the 'entirely new'. In this immensely diverse world most thoughts have already occurred to someone in the same or a different form. What originality can there be in truth, which is as hoary as the endless sky, as the bright moon? Yet, a truthful man is always original. The old, unoriginal sky has still a thousand charming facets to disclose; the lovely moon has yet numberless splendours to shed. Indeed, the originality of a genius often shines forth in minute details; his gifts to the world may not so much be sought in the *subject-matter* of his writing, but in the glowing facets of his mind, and the minds of his men and women revealed through it.

A great literary creator resembles the

Creator of the universe in his deft use of illusion. Everyone may not agree with the Vedāntic concept of *Māyā*, but it is everybody's experience that life is full of illusions, in the sense that no value, no pattern persists permanently. Our childhood longings and dislikes sink into insignificance as youth enters the scene, and youthful dreams pass into oblivion as old age slackens our pace. Like a dream, everything seems momentous for the time being, but, often to our utter frustration and surprise, makes room for something else. What are these experiences, if not illusions? Yet, we are very rarely conscious of them as illusions. Seeing men dying all around us, we behave as if we have eluded death. A superb fiction writer weaves such delicious, ethereal illusions that we are thrilled by their charm, roll them over in our minds, and grasp them only to come face to face with the meaning of life. It is of course true that literary illusion is artifice, whereas God's illusory universe is self-existent. As large and full as life itself, the illusions sustained by a master writer raise us beyond illusions, slowly mould us to regard the permanent reality with poise. Identification with it may yet be quite far, but not too far.

LITERATURE TODAY

Several modern thinkers have expressed the fear that the ideals of literature are suffering a set-back in this age of unabashed utilitarianism. Stephen Spender, for instance, moans: 'The idea of something purely creative, conditionless as God or life itself, which is the shaping force at the centre of the individual imagination, has disappeared. Instead, the centre of the modern consciousness is utilitarian.' (*The Making of a Poem*, p. 271) The pattern of life has doubtless changed a lot in the modern age. The minimum expectation of

amenities has risen to an impressive size. Quite a few of us can neither read in the absence of an electric light nor write without a desk and chair to support; the inner light and the backbone seem to have weakened. But considering the situation in its entirety, these changes seem only skin-deep. Has the essential pattern of human life undergone any serious change? Still a child is born without teeth; volcanoes and earthquakes continue to make the most prosperous helpless. Still the eye is the only organ of sight, the tongue of taste—for knowing the taste of potassium cyanide, you have still to pay with your life. Speedy communications and impatient advertisement today tend to magnify everything, including the modern utilitarian attitude. In this matter of assessing the role of literature in the complex modern life, it is easy to exaggerate both ways, especially because no objective tests can be used. Nevertheless, looking to the great writers of the modern age like Eugene O'Neill, Robert Frost, Tagore, and many others, it is a safe guess that literature will continue to help men and women into mellowing

their personalities.

LITERATURE AND THE ENRICHMENT OF LIFE

Literature, though man-made, is part of God's scheme of things. If man at his best is the noblest creation of God, literature at its best is the grandest attainment of man. Literature is inevitable and inherent in man. As clothes are to the body, literature is to the mind. It is a sweet compelling force; of all arts, it is the most widely cultivated. While enjoying art and literature, you are enriching life, and heading toward a fuller, blissful finale, which makes death a pale routine. Great literature is as much an end in itself as a means to an end: child is complete in itself, but it is also the precursor of man, indeed, performing the latter role satisfactorily is a necessary condition of its being complete. A seed is healthy only if it ends up as a normal plant. The arts, including literature, even when practised for their own sake, lead men and women into the greatest art, for what art is greater than living a full life?

THE JIVANMUKTA'S WAY OF LIFE

SRI M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

Jīvanmukti is one of the distinctive doctrines of the Advaita Vedānta. It means release from the shackles of empirical existence here and now, while we are yet in the flesh. This possibility is mentioned in the revealed texts (Śrutis). It stands to reason (*yukti*), and it is also vouched by the authentic experience of renowned mystics all over the world (*anubhava*). Śrī Śaṅkara bears testimony to it and asserts that Brahman-realization (*Brahmavedana*)

and corporeal existence (*deha-dhāraṇa*) are quite compatible with each other. He further says that such an experience, vouched by the heart's conviction, carries its own certitude with it, and no critic is competent to question it (*Memorial Edition of Śrī Śaṅkara's Works*, Vol. III, p. 791) Elsewhere (*ibid.*, Vol IX, p. 628), he observes that the experience is self-certifying and stands in need of no proof. The object of this paper is not, however, to

set forth the rationale of the doctrine, but to describe the way of life of the liberated man.

There is no connexion between the dawn of spiritual enlightenment and the dissolution of the physical body. The two are independent of each other, and owe their genesis to separate causes. The former may come at any moment provided the necessary effort has already been put in. The dissolution of the physical frame will take place only when the *prārabdha karma* that has given rise to it has exhausted itself. It will not come to an end merely because enlightenment has set in. It is like the potter's wheel or the sped arrow. The wheel will stop revolving only when the momentum it has received has spent itself out. Similarly, the arrow that has been shot with a certain amount of force will not fall down until its force is spent. *Prārabdha* is operative *karma*. It gives rise to a particular kind of body in a suitable environment, so that it may yield its fruits and thereby work itself out. When a man is half-way through his *prārabdha karma*, the saving knowledge may dawn owing to the effort he has put in and the spiritual discipline he has gone through. Owing to the residue of *prārabdha*, the enlightened man has necessarily to remain in the flesh. The question is: What will be his way of life? How will he conduct himself for the rest of his lifetime? Will there be any external marks by which he could be distinguished from his fellow men?

Arjuna believed that the man of steadfast wisdom (*sthitaprajña*) could be spotted by his manner of walking and talking, by his outward behaviour and the reports current about him. And in that belief, he addressed his question to Śrī Kṛṣṇa: 'What is the mark of the man of steadfast wisdom, of steadfast spirit, O Kṛṣṇa? How does the man of firm understanding speak, how does he sit, and how does he walk?' (*Bha.*

gavad-Gītā, II. 54) This question is in line with the view of the present-day behaviourist psychology. According to this school, mental attitudes necessarily find an expression in physical behaviour, which is observable by others. In fact, the behaviourists go to the extent of saying that a man's mental make-up can be safely inferred from his outward behaviour, and the so-called inward experiences which cannot be translated into externally observable behaviour are illusory and even apocryphal. They, therefore, look upon mystical experiences with suspicion.

But this is going too far. No-one who has had any experience of inner life, of the deeper currents of thought and feeling, of vague aspirations and half-formed notions, of struggles in the subconscious and the unconscious layers of the mind, can bring himself to subscribe without reservations to the behaviourist view. Simple emotions like rage and hatred may easily express themselves in outward behaviour, but not the more complicated ones. In an article entitled 'Man without Mind', F. H. Heinemann wrote: 'Behaviourism is all right in very simple cases where mental terms have a direct connexion with action. Rage, anger, or envy may adequately be described by external behaviour, because mind and body are so closely interconnected that nobody is able to say where the inward emotion ends and where the outward behaviour begins. But it is not possible to translate all mental facts into publicly observable behaviour. The half-conscious, subconscious, and unconscious states of mind do not find adequate expression in external behaviour. If the inner experiences of St. Augustine and Rousseau could be judged from their outward behaviour, someone who had observed their behaviour closely could have written their biographies, and there should have been no need for them to write their auto-

biographies. The private experiences of the individual cannot be absorbed in the sea of stereotyped external behaviour. It may be that just what cannot be translated into the language of external behaviour is the most valuable part of man's mental life.' (*Hibbert Journal*, October 1950)

Nor can we attach much importance to the reports current about the *jīvanmukta*. In the first place, the life of the enlightened man will not be very much in the open. Being absorbed in meditation on the Highest, he will shun company and positively hate publicity. He will love to live in sequestered places, in mountain caves, in forest fastnesses and lonely river-beds, as Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra Sarasvatī, himself a liberated soul, says in his *Ātma-vidyāvīlāsa* (stanzas 15, 34, 36, and 43). Commenting on the *Brahma-Sūtra* (III. iv. 50), Śrī Śaṅkara quotes with approval two stanzas from the *Mahābhārata* which make out that the knower of Brahman will be so little exposed to public view that other people will have very little occasion to know whether he is a learned man or not, whether he is of good or bad character, whether he is even alive or dead. In the second place, what little other people may know of him may be a travesty of the truth. His way of living and acting will be prompted by the new enlightenment which has dawned on him. His sense of values will have undergone a sea change. He will turn his back on things which men of the world hold dear, and will be wide awake to the things of the spirit, of which other people remain wholly ignorant, says the *Gītā* (II. 69). His actions will therefore be out of the ordinary. Being unable to comprehend the motives behind such behaviour, people may put him down for a crazy, mad fellow, and even hate him. Sadāśiva Brahmendra, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Ramana Maharshi, and Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati, the late Pontiff

of Sringeri, were all treated as madmen. Kālidāsa has brought out the truth of the matter in a well-known verse :

Alokasāmānyamacintyahetukam ;

Dviṣanti mandāscaritam mahātmanām—
'Dull-witted people find fault with the behaviour of great souls, because it appears strange to them and they are unable to comprehend the motive behind it.'
(*Kumārasambhava*, V. 75)

The distinguishing marks of the *jīvanmukta* are not, therefore, to be looked for in his externals or in what people say about him, but in the disposition of his mind, his outlook on men and things, his sense of values, and in his relationship to the universe. In answering Arjuna's question, the Lord rightly calls attention to the qualities of the *jīvanmukta's* mind. Its chief quality is its complete freedom from desires. 'When a man puts away all the desires of his mind, O Arjuna, and when his spirit finds comfort in itself, then is he called a man of steadfast wisdom. He who is not perturbed in mind by adversity and who has no eagerness amidst prosperity, he from whom desire, fear, and anger have fallen away, he is called a sage of firm understanding. He who has no attachments on any side and who does not rejoice or hate when he obtains good or evil, his wisdom is firmly set.' (*Gītā*, II. 55-57 ; Trans. Professor D. S. Sarma) The entire description of the *sthītaprajña* (*ibid.*, 55-72) turns on the central idea of absolute desirelessness.

This is in thorough contrast with the usual state of mind in which most of us find ourselves. Owing to congenital ignorance, we identify ourselves with the physical body, and treat all the rest of the world as outside of us and therefore not belonging to us. When our sense-organs come into contact with them, we begin to long for them. Longing develops into desire. When de-

sire becomes intense, there arises a fear in our minds that, after all, we may not succeed in securing those objects. When we actually fail, in spite of our best efforts, we grow angry and begin to rail at the order of the world. The anger develops into a rage, when we find another man succeeding where we have failed. From rage to jealousy, and from jealousy to hatred, is an easy and natural transition. If by chance we succeed in securing the objects of our desire, we are elated, and elation breeds hope of further successes. Desires grow as a consequence, and we never see the end of them. Sometimes we succeed, and at other times we fail. Thus we keep on alternating between success and failure, elation and depression, pleasure and pain, joys and sorrows, and the other pairs of opposites. There can be no peace for a mind thus tossed about like a log of wood in a stormy sea. The Lord asks the very pertinent question: 'Where is happiness for the man whose mind is not at peace with itself?' (ibid., II. 66) This is the predicament in which the majority of us find ourselves.

We find agreeable relief when we turn our attention to the state of mind of the *jīvanmukta*. The description of that state given in the *Gītā* is reinforced and rendered more concrete and real by the accounts given by universally accepted Brahman-knowers of their authentic experiences. Śadāśiva Brahmendra is one of them, and he has poured out the fullness of his joy in a poem known as '*Ātmavidyāvīlāsa*'. It is a spontaneous expression of the peace and bliss that he is inwardly experiencing as a consequence of the highest realization which has come to him. Śrī Śaṅkara has also recorded his experiences in two minor poems, *Jīvanmuktānandalaharī* and *Praudhānubhūti*.

Close examination of these poems will reveal that they had attained the state of

desirelessness as the pre-condition of their enlightenment. By steady and unremitting effort, they brought their senses under control and did not allow them to wander at will. This is a very difficult thing to do. The Lord says: 'Though a man may ever strive, O Arjuna, and be ever so wise, his senses will rebel and carry off his mind by force.' (*Gītā*, II. 60) 'The mind, being fickle, easily allows itself to be carried away by the senses. Arjuna refers to this weakness of the mind and says: 'The mind is fickle, O Kṛṣṇa; it is violent, powerful, and obstinate. To control it is as difficult as to control the wind.' (ibid., VI. 34-35) The Lord understands the difficulty and suggests that the only way of bringing the mind under control is by steady practice and detachment. The Indian writers usually liken the mind to the ape. 'Just as we bring the monkey under control by cleverly getting it into a trap, even so the mind must be restrained by the power of discrimination. Just as a fierce tiger is killed by a sword, even so the violent mind must be subjugated by the force of wisdom.' (*Ātmavidyāvīlāsa*, 23-24)

The eightfold *yoga* has been prescribed by Patañjali as the discipline whereby one could give the quietus to the states of the mind known as *vṛttis* and rest at peace with oneself. The Lord also prescribes the same remedy: 'Having, in a clean place, firmly fixed his seat, neither too high nor too low, and having spread over it the sacred grass and then a deerskin and then a cloth, he should practise *yoga* for his own purification, restraining his thoughts and senses and bringing his mind to a point.' (*Gītā*, VI. 11-12) 'A man should gain tranquillity little by little with a steadfast purpose.' (ibid., VI. 25)

The ultimate and surest remedy is, of course, the realization of the nature of one's true self. The discipline that we enforce on the mind from without may restrain its

activities to a certain extent, but will not bring about a radical change in its outlook. A secret longing for the pleasures of the senses may still linger in the inmost depths of the mind. This deep-seated craving can be exterminated only by a total awakening. 'The taste for the objects of sense falls away when the Supreme is seen.' (ibid., II. 59) The realization that the Ātman is the supreme value will throw into the shade all the lesser values like wealth, possessions, pleasures, and so forth. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (I. iv. 8) says that the Ātman is dearer than the son, dearer than wealth, and dearer than everything else.' Brahmendra says that consequent on his realizing the nature of his true self, his mind remains steady, free from the longing for objects of the senses, and desires completely rooted out. (*Ātma-vidyāvīlāsa*, 12, 27, and 52)

Such a controlled mind, needless to say, does not run after the objects of sense. It entertains no desires, and consequently does not long for this thing or that thing. It is not elated by success or depressed by failure. The *jīvanmukta* treats both alike. His mental equanimity will remain unperturbed by the vicissitudes of fortune. Not even the worst calamity can shake his equipoise. Pleasure and pain, joys and sorrows, have no meaning for him. He will rise clean above the sway of the pairs of opposites. The states of the mind known as the *vyttis* do not rise in it, and hence it remains calm and unruffled like the ocean wherein all the waves have subsided.

The total eradication of desire is therefore the distinctive mark of the *jīvanmukta*. He will make no exception even in the case of the so-called harmless desires. He will firmly refuse to give quarter even to those desires which may lead to some good either to himself or to others. The *vyttis* should be completely set at rest. Those who had the privilege of knowing Sri Chandra-

sekharā Bharati, the late Pontiff of Sringeri, at close quarters will bear witness to this fact. He firmly set his face against entertaining any kind of desire. In his opinion, desire as such was an evil and deserved to be uprooted. In the absence of desires, the *vyttis* do not arise, and, in the absence of the latter, the mind ceases to function. This state is known as the destruction of the mind or *manonāśa*. Its nature and the steps leading to it are set forth at length in *Yoga-vāsiṣṭha*.

When the mind ceases to function, the sense of ego disappears, and with it egoism, conceit, and arrogance take their exit. (*Ātma-vidyāvīlāsa*, 8, 12, 20) The feeling of 'I' and 'mine' will fade out for want of a base to sustain it. Consequent on the disappearance of the sense of ego, the *jīvanmukta* will move about without likes and dislikes, without attachment or aversion, longing for nothing in particular, taking delight in all things, not identifying himself with any, amused by the shows of the world and not deluded by them. He will see the infinite Self in every living creature. (ibid., 45) His heart will be full of compassion and will be as cool as the rays of the moon. (ibid., 20, 41) He will rise above the narrow restrictions of caste and creed. (ibid., 45) All are equal in his eyes, and it never occurs to him to say 'This is my man' and 'That is your man'.

He will discard all possessions, put aside all his baggage, and will be supremely happy to roam about as a religious mendicant (*parivrājaka*). (ibid., 54) He will just keep body and soul together by eating what chance brings in his way. (ibid., 40) The palm of his hands will be his begging bowl. (ibid., 35) The cool shade of the tree will be his resting place. His forearm will serve as pillow, the bare floor as mattress, the heavens as his cover, and absolute detachment as his bedfellow. (ibid., 46) Filled with a new sense of freedom, he will

wander from place to place, happy everywhere and taking delight in all things. (ibid., 14) He may sing or dance, roll on the floor, cover himself with dust, and even behave like a crazed individual. All the time, he will be in the enjoyment of the bliss arising from his Brahman-realization. Even the Veda will not bind him. He will not allow its injunctions and prohibitions to sit tight on him. He will feel himself free to place his own interpretation on the Vedic texts on the basis of his plenary experience. (ibid., 42) Needless to say, he will throw away the weight of learning as a useless burden. He will not be interested in the discussions of learned men. He will never seek to establish the superiority of his own creed. (*Praudhā-nubhūti*, 13) Such an attempt will appear to him as a form of vulgar self-assertion. In his opinion, all creeds and all shades of thought have their place, as human beings are not all of the same type. To suit different tastes and temperaments, different forms of religion and different modes of worship are necessary. The *jīvanmukta's* attitude will therefore be characterized by the widest tolerance. He will not rudely disturb the faith of anybody. Rather he will advise people belonging to other creeds and faiths to remain true to their principles. He is convinced that an all-wise Providence has placed people in their proper places. They are where they ought to be. The faith and creed in which they are born will be most congenial to their moral and spiritual needs and provide the best opportunity for their onward progress. A violent change will do them more harm than good.

Thus he will guide his fellow men to their final destination by slow degrees, giving his helping hand whenever necessary. He will be ever ready to give useful and practical advice to spiritual aspirants. He will make no distinction between the high and the

low in this matter. Brahman-realization is the ultimate goal set for all people. Some may arrive at it sooner than others. But all are bound to arrive at it in God's good time. The same means may not suit all people. The paths are bound to be different, but the goal is the same. To help people to cross the ocean of ignorance, he will ever be ready and will even offer voluntary assistance. He will do this service not out of pity or condescension, but in the spirit of pure love and compassion. He will not expect anything in return for such service. It will be disinterested in the literal sense of the term.

He will thus set an example in unselfish activity. The doctrine of *niṣkāma-karma* taught in the *Gītā* will thus acquire a new significance. It will come nearer to us when we find it effortlessly practised by another human being. He will also set an example to others by doing the correct thing at the correct moment and in the correct manner. Correctness of conduct will come as easy to him as breathing to us. In any given situation, he knows as if by instinct what is the right thing to do and straightway he will address himself to it without any wavering or vacillation. He will not be torn by doubts, nor weigh the pros and cons of the different alternative courses of action. He will put his finger on the right spot, and his touch will be sure and infallible. He will never do anything morally wrong or reprehensible, but what exactly he will do in a given situation will be unpredictable. There is no question of his following the beaten track. He will rather be a lone adventurer in a trackless region. (*Ātmavidyāvīlāsa*, 6, 9) As a Sanskrit verse says, his movements are like the flight of a bird in the sky or like the trail of the fish in water, both of which leave no trace behind :

Sakunānāmivākāśe jāle vāricarasya ca ;

Padam yathā na dṛśyetha tathā jñānavatām gatih.

The mariner may require buoys and mooring ropes when he is thrown in the wide expanse of the waters, but not so the *jīvanmukta*, who will fearlessly float in the ocean of spirit without rudder or sail, because it is not an alien element to him but his very self.

Brahmendra makes frequent references to his roaming freely and fearlessly in the realm of the spirit. 'The *jīvanmukta*, awakened to his true self by his revered teacher, moves freely in the ocean of bliss'; 'The blessed saint revels freely in the domain of unequalled happiness'; 'The darkness of his ignorance dispelled by the grace of the teacher, the ascetic floats in the limitless ocean of bliss'. (*Ātma-vidyāvilāsa*, 10) 'Free of all attachments and finding delight in all things, the *muni*, immersed in the ocean of pure bliss, sports like an innocent child.' (ibid., 14)

This crowning experience will convince him that in essence he is pure spirit, bereft of every taint of matter. Fully realizing that neither *Māyā* nor any of its effects can ever touch him, he will stand apart and remain the bare witness of the play of the

world which is the creation of *Māyā*. He will not be deluded by it in the least. Its attractive things will not tempt him. He will treat them all as mere illusion. Even if the impossible happens, he will not be taken aback. 'The sun may grow cool and the rays of the moon prove to be scorching, but the *jīvanmukta*, treating all this as the play of *Māyā*, will not begin to wonder.' (ibid., 18) Anything may happen but he will not be surprised. Even the dread prospect of universal destruction by the process of what present-day scientists call 'heat-death' will hold no terrors for him. He will be so firmly established in the spirit that nothing can shake him or disturb his equanimity. That is the supreme state characterized by boundless joy, which is beyond the reach of the senses and the understanding. On gaining this state the blessed individual feels that there is nothing higher for him to gain. This is the state to which King Janaka was taken step by step by the sage *Yājñavalkya*: 'This is the eternal glory of a knower of Brahman. ... He sees all as his self. Evil does not overtake him, but he transcends all evil; he becomes sinless, taintless, free from doubts and a true *Brāhmaṇa* (knower of Brahman).' (*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV. iv. 23)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

In the concluding portion of his article on 'Swami Vivekananda's Synthesis of Science and Religion', Swami Ranganathananda, Head of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, points out how science and religion, as understood in the light of Vedānta and the teachings of

Swami Vivekananda, find their fulfilment in each other. In their synthesis, as visualized by Swami Vivekananda, lies the future of the modern civilization and the safety and happiness of mankind.

'Vinoba Bhave: The Nature and Scope of His Social Reforms—3' is the final instalment of the article by Dr. Jacques-Albert

Cuttat, the Swiss Ambassador in India. Dr. Cuttat sees in the movement started by Vinobaji a force, on the one hand, for the emotional, cultural, spiritual, and political integration of India, and on the other, for the synthesis of the spiritual cultures of the East and the West. While we wholeheartedly welcome Dr. Cuttat's plea that India, by which he particularly refers to Hinduism, should assimilate not only the material riches and the science of the West, but also her spiritual tradition, which by the way she is already doing, we beg leave to submit that it is not quite correct to say that India is unaware of, or disregards, or discredits that aspect of the spiritual tradition of the West which lays emphasis on the development of a human outlook. Nor is it correct to say that Advaita is the very opposite of the Sermon on the Mount, preached in the Bible. Advaita does not contradict any phase of religion or ethics, but is the fulfilment of all of them, and is broad enough to find a place for each one of them within its fold.

Professor G. S. Banhatti, M.A., our new

contributor, is the Head of the Department of English at Shivaji College, Parbhani, Maharashtra. He did his M.A. in Sanskrit in 1952 winning the gold medal, and in English in 1957. He has published several papers and a modest critical volume, *William Congreve*, and has critically edited a couple of Sanskrit texts. He has recently brought out a book on Swami Vivekananda, *The Quintessence of Vivekananda*, and is bringing out another book on the Swami in Marathi. We are thankful to him for sending us the paper on 'The Spiritual Function of Literature', which, we are sure, will be read with great interest and benefit by our readers.

'The Jīvanmukta's Way of Life', by Sri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer, M.A., formerly Professor of Philosophy, Annamalai University, is based mainly on the descriptions of the *jīvanmukta*, the liberated soul, given in the *Gītā* and *Ātmavidyāvīlāsa*, the celebrated work by Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra Sarasvatī. An article on Śrī Sadāśiva Brahmendra appeared in the July 64 number of *Prabuddha Bharata*.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE WAY OF LIGHT. BY T. V. KAPALI SASTRI. 1963. Pages 257. Price Rs. 8.

LAMPS OF LIGHT. BY M. P. PANDIT. 1963. Pages 77. Price Rs. 5.

Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry.

SADHANA FOR SELF-REALIZATION. BY SWAMI PRATYAGATMANANDA SARASWATI AND SIR JOHN WOODROFFE (ARTHUR AVALON). Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras 17. 1963. Pages 127. Price Rs. 6.

In a true enough sense, these three books constitute an organic unit, as all of them deal with what is at the heart of the scale of values in our life and culture, namely, Self-realization and the *sādhana* for its

attainment. But there are significant differences between them, just as we should expect to find in the integral parts of an organism. The first two books approach the great theme from the standpoint of Sri Aurobindo's teachings, and the last from that of Tantra Śāstra. Together, they represent some of the finest flowers of Indian mysticism.

Sri Kapali Sastri's name is widely known and respected in South India. His *Way of Light* is really a *way* indeed. In collecting and arranging biographical and literary material bearing on Sri Sastriar, the editor has achieved something magnificent. The book is in three sections. The first is introductory, in which we get glimpses of the biographical background covering the period of Sri

Sastriar's *sādhana* from 1930 to 1951. We notice here a systematic evolution, step by step, of the seeker of the true self. Certain landmarks in this development, particularly Sri Sastriar's first meeting with Sri Aurobindo, may be clearly noted. The second section, called Part I, contains extracts from Sastriar's correspondence, and the last part selections from the editor's journal *Tusarakoti*. Each of these two parts is divided into four subsections: (1) *Sādhana*, (2) Correspondence with Sri Aurobindo, (3) General, and (4) Literary. One gets, in these, glimpses of Sastriar's incisive mind, penetrating intellect, and deep spiritual experiences. The appendix gives us the gist of Sastriar's message.

The second book is from the pen of the editor of the first. The twelve themes, expounded in seventy-seven pages, reflect deep spiritual experiences. The dominant idea in all the chapters is core value of the Mother as the 'Lamp of Light'. There is also the profound conviction that the integral *yoga* of Sri Aurobindo is the key to Self-realization. Each theme exudes the personality of the author. In the 'Consciousness of Material Things', for instance, the way in which Sri Pandit conveys to us the message of flowers is unique and inspiring. Dream interpretation is raised to an exalted plane of spirituality. The chapters on *sādhana* are superb. And the volume concludes, fittingly enough, with the three fundamental movements in the integral effort for the upliftment of the entire human nature.

The third book is in a different tune, but rings the same note as the first and the second. This, too, deals with *sādhana* for Self-realization. It is, in fact, a compilation from the writings of Sir John Woodroffe, with appropriate introductions from Swamiji. *Mantra*, *yantra*, and *tantra* are the three themes discussed in this thin volume. Swamiji points out in his general introduction, *mantra* is Śakti; *yantra* is form, pattern, or diagram of a thing, process or volition; and *tantra* is the science and art of realization. The first part of the volume deals with *mantra*, specially with the *Gāyatrī mantra*. *Yantras* are discussed in Part II, and the last part expounds *tantra* as realization, its philosophy, and also the bases of *kundalinī-yoga*.

These three books have come at a most appropriate period in our cultural evolution. The contemporary generation, which takes pride in calling itself progressive will do well to read these books with reverence, and get some understanding of the core values of our culture. If progress is synonymous with blind adulation of science, then the grave warning has already been sounded that such adulation will inevitably end in self-destruction. The heart of science is all illusion, and its foundations

are laid in quicksands of ignorance. This illusion (*māyā*) and this ignorance (*avidyā*) can be destroyed only by understanding, appreciating, and assimilating the spirit of such books as these under review.

PROFESSOR P. S. NAIDU

POET-PHILOSOPHERS OF THE RĠG-VEDA. By DR. C. KUNHAN RAJA. Ganesh & Co. (Madras) Private Ltd., Madras 17. 1963. Pages xxx+330. Price Rs. 20.

The late Dr. C. Kunhan Raja was one of the best authorities of our times on the Vedic literature. An original thinker, a devout believer in the abiding values of Indian culture, and a great philosopher, Dr. Raja planned a series of books on Vedic literature and Indian philosophy. His sad demise recently has caused a great gap in the world of scholarship. The present work under review may be the last of his published writings during his lifetime.

I am glad to note that Dr. Raja has accepted two of my basic findings: that the *Rġg-Veda* emerged in its present form at the end of a great age of culture, and that the present text is rich with superb poetry and profound canons of literary criticism. These two tenets were established by me when I was working under the supervision of Dr. Raja on the *Rġg-Veda*. In the present volume, these central ideas have been developed in a more valuable manner. It is conclusively shown that the great poets of the *Rġg-Veda* are great philosophers and founders of the philosophical schools. The intimate blending of poetry and philosophy is a unique feature of Indian genius.

The western approach always emphasized on a later date for the first and the tenth books of the *Rġg-Veda*. But the poets of these books have been mentioned in the other books as being very ancient ones. Dr. Raja argues correctly in favour of even a pre-Vedic character of these books. In the second place, he argues that the *Zend Avesta* developed under West-Asian influences, whereas the *Rġg-Veda* alone presents the true Aryan traditions. Thirdly, all the philosophical schools of India appear in the *Rġg-Veda*, thereby putting an end to the myth of an evolution of an Indian philosophy. The *Rġg-Vedic* religion is not a monotheism, but a monism emphasizing a matter-cum-spirit unity.

With these basic ideas, Dr. Kunhan Raja explains and interprets the major poetical-philosophical hymns of Dirghatamas, Bṛhaspati, Śunaḥśepa, Yama, Manu, Angīras, and others. The basic philosophical tenets of these poet-philosophers are expounded in a very illuminating manner. The chapters on the formation of the world and integration have given a fitting

finale to the volume. At the end, we have the text and rendering of thirteen Rg-Vedic hymns. The translation is clear, charming, and accurate. Dr. Raja's comments are bold, original, and thought-provoking.

Every Vedic scholar and every student of Indian thought must go through this monumental work.

DR. P. S. SASTRI

ASPIRATIONS OF THE COMMON MAN. BY DR. G. C. DEV. The University of Dacca, East Pakistan, 1963. Pages 215. Price Rs. 6.

As one who has taught philosophy all his life, Dr. Dev knows the ins and outs of the subject so thoroughly that he can use it as much for the training of the academic intellect as to serve the needs of the common man. In the course of an interesting discussion, interlarded with anecdotes and legends, he points out how the different traditions of philosophy and religion, for example, the Upaniṣads, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, have contributed distinct and dynamic values for the betterment of man as an individual as well as a member of the collectivity. He makes an earnest attempt in this book to summon together all these elements to work out a basis for a collective life of harmony and goodwill and also a synthesis between the claims of life on earth and the lure of the beyond.

M. P. PANDIT

BENGALI

SRI MA-DARŚAN (PART II). BY SWAMI NITYATMANANDA. General Printers & Publishers Private Ltd., 119 Dharamtala Street, Calcutta 13. Pages 388. Price Rs. 5.

'Ma' or Mahendra Nath Gupta, the author of *Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Kathāmṛta* (or *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*), is a household name among the devotees and admirers of Sri Ramakrishna and needs no introduction. Ma's whole mind was saturated with the ideas of Sri Ramakrishna, and to those who visited him, he talked about God and spiritual matters alone, enlivening his talks with incidents from Sri Ramakrishna's life and his teachings. His language was very simple and suitable for the workaday world; and he quoted profusely from the *Kathāmṛta*, the Bible, the *Gītā*, and the Upaniṣads. Sometimes religious songs were sung by him; at other times, holy books were read and discussed to emphasize and clarify the points discussed. The combined effect was very inspiring and uplifting. Swami

Nityatmananda has caught some of those spiritually elevating hours for us in the book under review. While reading these pages, one is, indeed, transported to the very presence of 'Ma'. The book is interesting and instructive throughout, though there are repetitions. But, then, repetitions are unavoidable in a book of this kind. The get-up is excellent, though a few printing mistakes have occurred here and there. Those who had the privilege of meeting and mixing with 'Ma' will enjoy a few more living moments with him here, while the others will find a saintly soul speaking on religious matters with conviction, vividness, and authority. The book also gives certain hitherto unknown facts about the Master and some of his direct disciples. There are also a few short notes on Swami Abhedananda's lectures.

S.C.

PANCAJANYA. BY SWAMI CHANDIKANANDA. Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama. Asansol. 1963. Pages 48. Price 50 P.

The book contains a number of beautiful songs on Swami Vivekananda and his brother disciples, as also some other devotional *bhajan*s. The songs are mostly for the young students who need the message of strength and vigour that Swamiji wanted them to imbibe. The songs can be sung in chorus also. It is a timely publication, inasmuch as its publication coincides with the birth centenary celebrations of the Swami.

S.C.

HINDI

BHĀRĀTĪYA SAMSKṚTI. BY DR. B. L. ATREYA. Darshana Printers, Moradabad. 1962. Pages 60. Price Re. 1.

In this informative essay on Indian culture, Dr. Atreya dwells upon the social, ethical, and spiritual aspects of the ages old tradition of the Indian people. He draws profusely from scholars, both in the East and the West, in support of his presentation. Among the many topics dealt with are the reasons for the persistence of this culture through all the vicissitudes the nation has had to pass through, the question of the origin of the Aryans who founded the Indian civilization and culture, its institutions of *varṇāśrama dharma*, *pañcayajña*, *yoga-upāsana*, etc.

The book deserves to be prescribed to undergraduates for the useful information it gives on the subject.

M. P. PANDIT

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH
MYLAPORE, MADRAS

The birth centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda, which started on Thursday the 17th January 1963 and were formally inaugurated on 20th January 1963 by Sri Morarji Desai, the former Finance Minister, Government of India, concluded with the final round of celebrations from 10th to 27th January 1964. The main features of the celebrations were: (1) An exhibition depicting the various facets of the Swami's life and work; (2) An inter-religious conference; (3) women's conference; (4) observance of a students' day; (5) a choice programme of talks, dramas, etc. for children; (6) essay and oratorical competitions for college students; (7) music performances by Sri Ariyakudi Ramanuja Aiyangar and party and Sri Madurai Mani Iyer and party (on 21st and 22nd respectively); (8) *Sarod* recital by Master Deepak Mukherji of Bombay, singing of *bhajan*s by Sri Pavitra Kumar Acharya, and a performance on *Jaltarang* by Sri Ramarao Parsatwar of Bombay (on 23rd); (9) demonstration of physical feats by Bishnucharan Ghosh and party of Calcutta; (10) intercollegiate sports; (11) staging of dramas depicting the life of Swamiji, in five languages, by the students and staff of the Vivekananda College; (12) feeding of the poor, and distribution of fruits and sweets to the patients of the T.B. sanatorium in Madras, on the final day of the celebrations; (13) distribution of copies of *Thus Spake Vivekananda* free to students who participated in the students' day celebrations; (14) *pārāyana* of the life and works of Swami Vivekananda on 12 January, in which about 200 men and women participated; (15) a huge and gorgeous procession, more than half a mile long, with elephants, horses, dummy-horse, *karagam*, peacock, and other dance parties, and *bhajana* parties adding to the *décor*, taken along the same route in which Swamiji was taken in procession when he first alighted at Madras on his return from the triumphal visit to the West, with seventeen arches erected on the route as was done on that occasion; and (16) *Harikatha* performances, special *pūjās*, *prayers*, *rudra yāga* performed by priests according to Vedic rites, *Gītā homa* performed by Sri Anna and party, *caṇḍī homa* conducted by the swamis of the Ramakrishna Order, and other religious observances. The main features of the exhibition were: a clay model display of some incidents from Swamiji's life; depiction of some scenes from Swamiji's life in paintings and fretwork; a stall of the German Embassy depicting Swamiji's

visit to Germany; a stall of the U.S.I.S. exhibiting some rare photographs of Swamiji in America; stalls of the different institutions of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in Madras and Chingleput; a stall showing a picture of Swamiji at Kanyakumari as the wandering monk and another in Chicago posture, all drawn in *raṅgoli*; and stalls by Sri Kapaleeswarar Devasthanam. The inter-religious conference was inaugurated by Swami Prabhavananda, Head of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, Hollywood, U.S.A., on 11 January. Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University, presided over the first session, and the subsequent four sessions were presided over respectively by Sri C. Rajagopalachariar, Swami Prabhavananda, Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam, Chief Minister of Madras, and Sri K. S. Ramaswami Sastriar. The other participants who spoke at the different sessions were: Professor S. A. Jain, M.A., L.T., Madurai, (on Jainism), Dr. Anthony Elenjittam, Editor, *Basic Education*, Bombay, (on Christianity), and Sri Dastoor N. D. Minocha Homiji, M.A., Bombay, (on Zoroastrianism); at the first session; Bhikku Ananda Kausalyan, Vidyalankara University, Ceylon, (on Buddhism), Dr. Gopal Singh, M.P., (on Sikhism), Dr. Abdul Wahab Bukhari, Principal, New College, Madras, (on Islam), and Sri Dastoor N. D. Minocha Homiji, at the second session; Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao, M.A., D.Litt., Reader in Philosophy, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, (on Dvaita philosophy), Dr. Devasenapati, Reader in Philosophy, Madras University, (on Śaiva Siddhānta), Sri Agnihotram Ramanuja Tatachariar of Kumbakonam (on Viśiṣṭādvaita), and Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Department of Philosophy, Madras University, (on Advaita), at the third session; Sri T. L. Venkatarama Aiyar, Retired Judge, Supreme Court, (in Sanskrit), Swami Vidyatmananda, of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, Hollywood, Sri C. R. Pattabhiraman, Union Dsputy Minister for Planning, Employment, and Labour, and Swami Ranganathananda, Head of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, at the fourth session; and Sri K. V. Jagannathan, Editor, *Kalaimagal*, Sri K. Belasubramania Aiyar, M.L.C., Sri K. Panchapagesa Iyer, Sri S. Krishnamurthy Iyer, and Mr. E. Brown, of San Francisco, (the last two on their personal reminiscences of Swamiji), at the final session. Among the foreigners who participated in the conference were: Dr. (Mrs.) Maria Burgi, of Switzerland, and Mr. Nishin Uchigaki, President of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, Osaka. Celebrations were also

organized at the Madras University, which has instituted a chair known as 'Vivekananda Chair' to mark the occasion, at the Vivekananda College, Queen Mary's College, Presidency College, S.I.E.T. College, Government Arts College, Ethiraj College, and the New College, as also in important localities of the city.

THE VEDANTA SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS MISSOURI, U.S.A.

On the one hundred and first birthday of Swami Vivekananda, January 17, 1963, a special devotional worship was performed in the shrine all morning. A number of devotees attended the function. Offered food was served to all. On the following Sunday, January 20, a special service was held in the chapel. After the opening prayer and the Sanskrit chant of the 'Hymn to Swami Vivekananda', Swami Satprakashananda, Head of the Society, read the message of the President of the Ramakrishna Order, and gave an address on 'Swami Vivekananda, the Man of the Hour'. The two songs that Swami Vivekananda sang to Ramakrishna at their first meeting in December 1881, were also sung at the meeting. After the reading of 'Song of the Sannyāsin', a short note on the origin of the poem and the discovery of the original manuscript (with its facsimile) was circulated. The booklet *The Universal Message of Swami Vivekananda* was then distributed, and refreshments were served.

The centenary year came to a close with the celebration of Swami Vivekananda's one hundred and second birth anniversary on Monday, the 6th January 1964. Besides the devotional worship in the shrine, a special service was conducted in the Society's chapel. After the chanting of Sanskrit hymns, the Swami presented a paper on 'Swami Vivekananda's Universality'. There were also devotional songs. The name of the winner in the Swami Vivekananda essay contest, who received an award of one hundred dollars, was announced at the meeting. Each of the three other contestants received a copy of the voluminous book *Vivekananda: The Yogas and Other Works*, compiled by Swami Nikhilananda. A notable feature of the centenary celebration was the distribution of two hundred and thirty-two copies of this book to different universities, colleges, public libraries, and other educational centres.

To celebrate the centenary, two special meetings were organized in Texas by devotees there. The first meeting was held in Mission, Texas. The audience listened to the Swami's recorded lecture 'Swami Vivekananda, the Man of the Hour'. The second meeting was held in the Students' Union Building in Pan American College, Edinburg, Texas. Among

others a number of college students, some faculty members of the college, and several members of the First Unitarian Church attended the meeting and heard the Swami's tape-recorded lecture on 'The World's Need of a Universal Message'. A lively discussion followed each lecture. Booklets and folders were also distributed.

WOOLWICH POLYTECHNIC, LONDON S.E. 18

A meeting was held at the Woolwich Polytechnic, London, on Monday, the 17th February 1964, at 6.15 p.m., under the auspices of the Indian Students Association and the Students' Union of the Polytechnic, to observe the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda. The meeting was presided over by Swami Ghanananda, Head of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, London, and Mr. Kenneth Walker, a leading scientist-surgeon, was the chief guest speaker. The meeting was attended by many distinguished persons from the staff and students of the polytechnic and also many invited guests from outside, among whom were: Principal Dr. Harold Heywood and Mrs. Heywood; Vice-Principal Dr. Derrick E. R. Godfrey, and Mrs. Godfrey; Mr. Jack Walker, Head of the Mechanical and Civil Engineering Department; Mr. John R. Haslam, Acting Head of the Electrical Engineering Department; Mr. Herbert S. Huxley; Mr. Ivor R. Bittle; Mr. Allan Weaver, Welfare Officer of the Polytechnic; Mr. Roy Fuller, Solicitor of Woolwich Equitable Building Society and a poet and writer; and Rev. Brian Cooper. After the Chairman of the Centenary Committee, Mr. Kenneth Bird, a post-graduate engineering research student, introduced the speakers and welcomed the guests and the audience, Mr. David Wills, the Editor of the *Poly News*, began the proceedings by reading a short excerpt from Vivekananda's works which stressed the common basis of all religions. Then the guest speaker Mr. Kenneth Walker, M.A., F.R.C.S., Mr. Ananda Jash, and the chairman of the meeting Swami Ghanananda addressed the gathering. After the presidential address, the guests were entertained with refreshments and the well-reputed film of Satyajit Ray, *Two Daughters*.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA SOCIETY BOSTON (MASSACHUSETTS)

The birth centenary celebration in honour of Swami Vivekananda, as also of Swami Brahmananda, was observed in the Boston and Providence Vedanta Centres. Large public banquets were held in both the cities on April 29 and 30, 1964, which were attended by distinguished guests and community leaders as well as devotees. Swami Pavitrananda and Swami Budhananda, of the Vedanta Society of New York and the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center

of New York respectively, were present at both the banquets.

Speakers in Boston included Swami Pavitrananda, Swami Budhananda, Swami Sarvagatananda, Head of the Boston and Providence Centres, and Dr. Allen E. Claxton, a New York City clergyman and loyal friend of Vedānta. In Providence, the three Swamis and Dr. Arthur E. Wilson, minister and friend of long standing, addressed the audience.

An atmosphere of spiritual inspiration pervaded both the celebrations as the speakers paid tribute to the two great disciples of Sri Ramakrishna who were responsible for launching the Ramakrishna Movement throughout the world.

In honour of these two wonderful personalities, a booklet was prepared for distribution at both the dinners and elsewhere, with biographical sketches of their lives, quotations from their writings and sayings, and a brief résumé of the life of their Master, Sri Ramakrishna.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA KANPUR

In connexion with the birth centenary of Swami

Vivekananda, speech and essay competitions for school and college students on the various aspects of the life and teachings of the Swami and *kabaddi* and football tournaments for school boys, in which more than 500 students from 45 institutions took part, were organized; and an eight-day programme of special meetings and conferences was arranged in the Ashrama premises from 5 November 1963. Special worship, *bhajan*s, distribution of *prasāda*, *Hari-kīrtana*, physical feats demonstration, vocal and instrumental music, lectures, a students' convention, a women's conference, and a public meeting were the various items of the programme. On the occasion, Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, laid the foundation-stone of the proposed centenary memorial library and reading room building. A centenary memorial lecture endowment, towards which the British India Corporation Ltd. has donated a sum of Rs. 10,000, has been instituted with the object of organizing every year, from 1964, two or three lectures by eminent persons on the life and message of the great Swami.

PROPOSED VIVEKANANDA UNIVERSITY AT BELUR

A PRINCELY GIFT

Sri Balaram Roy of Calcutta (formerly of Bhagyakul, East Pakistan) created a Trust in June 1962, and transferred to the Trustees some of his immovable properties for the establishment and maintenance of a University at Belur to be initiated by the Ramakrishna Mission to perpetuate the sacred memory of Swami Vivekananda. He made the Hon'ble Sri P. C. Sen, the Hon'ble Sri Saila Kumar Mukherjee, and three others Trustees of the said Trust. In terms thereof, the Trustees transferred the Trust properties to the Ramakrishna Mission on the 17th June 1964 for the above-mentioned purpose. The properties are likely to fetch an annual income of over a lakh of rupees.

The Mission has already applied to the Government of West Bengal, together with the draft Bill of the Vivekananda University, for necessary legislation. The Bill seeks to affiliate institutions situated outside the province of West Bengal also. This inter-provincial character will be a unique feature of the Vivekananda University.

It may be mentioned here that our late beloved Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, conveyed his best wishes to the President of the Ramakrishna Mission for the success of the University.

We appeal to the generous public to come forward to help the establishment of the Vivekananda University, which will be a fitting memorial to the great patriot-saint of modern India; and the sooner the Government takes steps for legislation and thereby gives effect to the man-making and character-forming educational ideals of Swamiji, the better for the rebuilding of the nation.

P.O. Belur Math
Dt. Howrah
8 July 1964

Sd/- Swami Vireswarananda
General Secretary
Ramakrishna Math and Mission